

HOUSE BILL NO. HB0143

Public service commission-consumer advocate.

Sponsored by: Representative(s) Ross and Illoway and
Senator(s) Burns and Case

A BILL

for

1 AN ACT relating to public utilities; creating an office of
2 consumer advocate within the public service commission;
3 providing powers and duties; providing for the transfer of
4 personnel; providing for funding; repealing discretionary
5 consumer advocate provision; making an appropriation; and
6 providing for an effective date.

7

8 *Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Wyoming:*

9

10 **Section 1.** W.S. 37-2-401 through 37-2-404 are created
11 to read:

12

13

ARTICLE 4

14

CONSUMER ADVOCATE

15

1 **37-2-401. Office of consumer advocate created;**
2 **purpose.**

3

4 The office of consumer advocate is created as a separate
5 division within the public service commission. The office
6 of consumer advocate shall represent the interests of
7 Wyoming citizens or broad classes of Wyoming citizens in
8 matters involving public utilities.

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10 **37-2-402. Consumer advocate; powers and duties.**

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12 (a) The consumer advocate shall have the power to:

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14 (i) Act as a consumer advocate in any matter
15 within the jurisdiction of the commission;

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17 (ii) Act as a party to a proceeding;

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19 (iii) Appeal any decision of the commission
20 regardless of whether the consumer advocate appeared as a
21 party before the commission;

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1 (iv) Provide information and assistance to
2 individual consumers regarding proceedings within the
3 jurisdiction of the commission;

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5 (v) Have the same access to books, maps,
6 contracts, reports and records of every description as the
7 commission.

8
9 (b) The consumer advocate shall not advocate for or
10 on behalf of any individual, organization or entity.

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12 **37-2-403. Consumer advocate; administrator and staff.**

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14 The administrative head of the division shall be an
15 administrator appointed by the governor not later than July
16 1, 2003. The administrator shall employ and supervise
17 personnel as authorized by legislative appropriation.
18 Except as provided in W.S. 37-2-404 the employees of the
19 office of consumer advocate shall not be supervised or
20 directed by the commission.

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22 **37-2-404. Consumer advocate; funding and expenses.**

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1 Funding for the office of consumer advocate shall be
2 included in the commission's budget and collected through
3 the uniform utility assessment. Incidental administrative
4 and clerical services for the office of consumer advocate
5 shall be provided by the commission. The commission shall
6 decide all matters of shared administrative and clerical
7 personnel.

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9 **Section 2.** W.S. 37-2-110(b) is repealed.

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11 **Section 3.**

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13 (a) Two hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$250,000.00)
14 is appropriated from the special revenue fund under W.S.
15 37-2-106 to the public service commission to fund the
16 administrator's position, consulting assistance, travel
17 expenses, computer facilities and office space for the
18 office of consumer advocate.

19

20 (b) Four (4) full-time positions are authorized for
21 the office of the consumer advocate. The administrator
22 shall employ two (2) rate analysts and one (1) attorney
23 from personnel currently employed by the commission. The
24 commission shall make a one (1) time designation of which

1 existing positions may become full-time consumer advocate
2 positions. Thereafter personnel within the office of
3 consumer advocate shall be employed and supervised as
4 provided by W.S. 37-2-403.

5

6 **Section 4.** This act is effective immediately upon
7 completion of all acts necessary for a bill to become law
8 as provided by Article 4, Section 8 of the Wyoming
9 Constitution.

10

11

(END)