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## OLR Bill Analysis

HB 5338

### ***AN ACT CONCERNING THE DESIGNATION OF CERTAIN SERVICE PROVIDERS FOR PURPOSES OF THE FEDERAL LIFELINE SERVICE BENEFITS.***

#### **SUMMARY**

This bill requires the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority to determine by order any telecommunications service provider eligible to provide service under the state's Lifeline Program (it appears this program is not currently operating).

The bill also makes minor and technical changes. It requires the program to be funded by all telecommunications services providers, rather than all telecommunications carriers. Under federal law, a telecommunications carrier is any provider of telecommunications services, excluding aggregators of telecommunications services (47 U.S.C. § 153).

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2026

#### **BACKGROUND**

##### ***Federal Lifeline Program***

Federal law established the federal Lifeline Program in 1985 and also authorizes states to establish state lifeline programs. The federal Lifeline Program provides a discount for telecommunications services for low-income households. The program is funded by telecommunications carrier payments to the federal Universal Service Fund.

#### **COMMITTEE ACTION**

Energy and Technology Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 26    Nay 0    (03/17/2026)