

**HB17-1323: PUC Ethics Add Consumer Protection****Rep. Esgar; Sens. Garcia and Cooke**

The Public Utilities Commission is vital to Colorado's state government but in recent years the Commission's reputation has been tarnished. The goal of this legislation is to foster public confidence in the Commission and their decisions by explicitly creating consumer protection ethics.

**Creates Transparency**

Creating a waiting period between employment at a regulated body and serving on the Commission.

- eliminates perception of utility executives working in favor of their previous employer/ industry.
- Creates a framework for the public to understand that the Commission is not a place for industry influence, but rather a serious place for creating fair and balanced utility practice.

Creates a public facing Code of Ethics, a Statement of Incompatible Activities and limits on Ex Parte Communications.

- This will create a nation leading framework for openness and transparency for the body. It demonstrates the guidelines the Commission sets for itself and the way in which the Commissioners do their business.
- Produces an outwork facing statement to the public that the Commission is a place committed to openness, ethics and independence.

Creates a platform for the public to access the written and audio records of proceedings on the web.

**Creates Third Party Reporting**

Creates the duties of the Independent Ombudsman for Ethics in conjunction with the Office of the Attorney General.

- Creates an independent relationship to receive complaints from within the PUC, or from outside parties. Empowers this party to create training efforts to further enhance and build on the ethics framework we are creating.
- Creates an independent reporting mechanism to report to the legislature on the progress that is being made.

**Readies PUC for Future Utility Landscape**

The utility landscape is changing immensely. To keep Colorado's PUC staff educated and informed, HB17-1323 creates new avenues to build a robust and capable organization.

- Creates the opportunity for PUC staff to receive temporary assignment to other relevant state agencies to build their knowledge base with pertinent issues, build additional expertise, familiarize themselves with sister agency operations and build professional development opportunities.
- Further it empowers the ED to work with outside educational institutions to ready prospective candidates for employment at the PUC should opportunities become available.
- Ensures the public believes our PUC is the most able bodied and prepared entity to work in an evolving utility environment.
- Invests in the strong staff already at the PUC.