Bill No.: SF0043 **Effective:** 7/1/2015

LSO No.: 15LSO-0165

Enrolled Act No.: SEA 26

Chapter No.: 96

Prime Sponsor: Joint Corporations, Elections & Political Subdivisions Interim Committee

Catch Title: Wyoming Telecommunications Act revisions.

Subject: Wyoming Telecommunications Act revisions.

Summary/Major Elements:

- The Wyoming Telecommunications Act (Act) regulates Wyoming telecommunications carriers, particularly those that are not subject to competition. The Act also provides a Wyoming Universal Service Fund (USF) from which carriers who are required to provide telecommunications service to remote areas of the state are compensated.

- The Act was set to sunset in 2015. This legislation extends the date to 2019.

- The legislation removes a number of obsolete provisions and deletes obsolete language from the Act. For example, provisions limiting the price of originating and terminating switched access are deleted because this type of pricing is no longer used.

- The legislation allows the Public Service Commission to determine whether a carrier is subject to competition on its own motion. The legislation deregulates carriers found to be subject to competition to the same extent that voice over internet protocol (VOIP) providers are deregulated. The legislation also specifies which laws and fees remain applicable to competitive carriers.

- This legislation limits the compensation offered by the Wyoming USF to only non-competitive telecommunications carriers. It also allows non-competitive carriers to elect to have their USF compensation calculated based on the costs they incur in providing service to remote areas, rather than the traditional method of basing compensation on the price a carrier charges for remote service. For carriers electing a price-based calculation, the legislation establishes a state-wide price benchmark of $30.00 per month which is adjusted every four years or at any time a change of more than 10% is necessary. If carriers electing a cost-based approach cause total distributions from the Wyoming USF to exceed 125% of their 2013-2014 level, distributions are reduced to 125% of their 2013-2014 level by reducing the compensation offered to carriers electing the cost-based approach.