



PLEASE VOTE NO ON AMENDMENT #4 (Utility Relocation by Rep. Pickett) to CSSB 312

- Moving critical infrastructure – gas lines, electric lines, fiber-optic cables – is an extremely complex undertaking. It can involve serious risks of service interruptions particularly when done by anyone who does not have the provider/customer relationship and the corresponding ability to carefully coordinate the work– which in many cases simply cannot happen, such as a line that provides electric service to a hospital.
- The work is performed by highly specialized technicians who have training and experience to do a job that simply can't be performed by just anyone.
- Unnecessarily increases the exposure of the state and countless utility customers by putting TxDOT in a position of overseeing work which its staff might not be experienced in or trained to do.
- Instead of encouraging more streamlined procedures that encourage utilities to move more quickly, this would result in further delay on unrelated projects and would waste valuable time and resources for both TxDOT and the utility involved.
- Many factors and causes on all sides contribute to relocation delays. The TxDOT Sunset highlights one in particular, a practice referred to as “dirty letting,” which is when contracts are put out for bid when they're not ready for construction. TxDOT is working on improving that situation, but it highlights how difficult it can be to determine the true cause of relocation delays.
- This language only adds to that difficulty. “Delay” is not defined; “good cause” is not defined. What exactly is a “timely agreement”?
- Faster relocation is a reasonable objective but should not be pursued at the cost of customers' essential services or the state's unwarranted exposure to relocation-related service outages.