

A Bill for an Act Relating to Public Utilities.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Hawaii:

SECTION 1. Section 269-16, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by amending subsection (d) to read as follows:

“(d) The commission shall make every effort to complete its deliberations and issue its decision as expeditiously as possible and before nine months from the date the public utility filed its completed application; provided that in carrying out this mandate the commission shall require all parties to a proceeding to comply strictly with procedural time schedules which it establishes. If a decision is rendered after the nine-month period, the commission shall in writing report the reasons therefor to the Legislature within thirty days after rendering the decision.

Notwithstanding subsection (c), if the commission has not issued its final decision on a public utility’s rate application within the nine-month period stated in this section, the commission shall within one month after the expiration of the nine-month period render an interim decision allowing the increase in rates, fares and charges, if any, to which the commission, based on the evidentiary record before it, believes the public utility is probably entitled. The commission may postpone its interim rate decision thirty days if the commission considers the evidentiary hearings incomplete. In the event interim rates are made effective, the commission shall by order require the public utility to return in the form of an adjustment to rates, fares, or charges to be billed in the future any amounts, with interest at a rate equal to the rate of return on such public utility’s rate base found to be reasonable by the commission, received under such interim rates which are in excess of the rates, fares or charges finally determined to be just and reasonable by the commission. Interest on any such excess shall commence as of the date that any rate, fare, or charge goes into effect which results in any such excess and shall continue to accrue on the balance of any such excess until returned.

The nine-month period in this subsection shall begin only after a completed application has been filed with the commission and a copy served on the consumer advocate. The commission shall establish standards concerning the data required to be set forth in the application in order for it to be deemed a completed application. The consumer advocate may within twenty-one days after receipt object to the sufficiency of any application and the commission shall hear and determine any such objection within twenty-one days after the same is filed. If the commission finds that the objections are without merit, the application shall be deemed to have been completed upon original filing. If the commission finds the application to be incomplete, it shall require the applicant

to submit an amended application consistent with its findings and the nine-month period shall not commence until the amended application is filed.”

SECTION 2. New material is underscored.

SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

(Approved June 12, 1984.)