
Technology, Telecommunications & Energy Committee

ESSB 6531

Brief Description: Modifying the duties of the joint committee on energy supply.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Environment, Energy & Water (originally sponsored by Senators Fraser, Finkbeiner, Brown, Hochstatter, Poulsen and Morton).

Brief Summary of Engrossed Substitute Bill

- Modifies notice requirements for declarations of an energy supply alert or energy emergency and any requests for extensions.
- Modifies the length of extensions for energy supply alerts or energy emergencies.

Hearing Date: 2/20/02

Staff: Pam Madson (786-7166).

Background:

The Joint Committee on Energy Supply is a legislative committee of eight members that only meets and functions during a declared energy supply alert or energy emergency. The Governor may initially declare an energy supply alert or energy emergency but must obtain approval of the joint committee for any extensions.

The committee meets to receive and review any plans proposed by the Governor for the production, allocation, and consumption of energy, any suspension or modification of existing Washington Administrative Code (WAC) rules, and any other relevant matters. The committee must send its recommendations, if any, to the Governor.

During an energy supply alert, the joint committee receives and may approve or disapprove a request from the Governor for an extension of the alert for an additional 60 days.

During an energy emergency, the joint committee receives and may approve or disapprove a request from the Governor for an extension of the emergency for an additional 45 days.

In January 2001, Governor Locke declared an energy supply alert in response to the developing energy crisis. The declaration used state law provisions creating the Joint Committee on Energy Supply (formerly the Joint Committee on Energy and Utilities), for the first time since enacted in the 1970s. The Governor requested three 60-day extensions that continued through October, 2001.

Summary of Bill:

The Joint Committee on Energy Supply is authorized to meet annually or at any time upon the call of the chair to receive information on the status of the state's or the region's energy supply. The committee may also meet upon the call of the chair when the Governor acts to terminate an energy supply alert or energy emergency.

The length of extensions for an energy supply alert or energy emergency is modified. An energy supply alert may be extended up to 90 days for the first extension and up to 120 days for subsequent extensions. An energy emergency may be extended up to 45 days for the first extension and up to 60 days for subsequent extensions. The committee may approve a requested extension for a longer period of time up to the maximum but not a shorter time than requested.

The Governor must provide the joint committee with notice, if practicable, when considering an energy supply alert or an energy emergency declaration. The Governor must provide at least 14 days notice when requesting an extension, unless notice is waived by the committee.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not Requested.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.