

HOUSE BILL REPORT

ESB 6493

As Reported By House Committee On:
Energy & Utilities
Appropriations

Title: An act relating to the state energy strategy.

Brief Description: Integrating the state energy strategy into statute.

Sponsors: Senators Sutherland, Amondson and Ludwig.

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Energy & Utilities, February 24, 1994, DP;
Appropriations, February 28, 1994, DPA.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY & UTILITIES

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 9 members:
Representatives Bray, Chair; Finkbeiner, Vice Chair; Casada,
Ranking Minority Member; Chandler, Assistant Ranking
Minority Member; Caver; Johanson; Kessler; Kremen and Long.

Staff: Fred Adair (786-7110).

Background: The Washington Energy Strategy Committee was legislatively established in 1991. In January 1993, the committee issued its report - Washington's Energy Strategy. The strategy included principles and policy recommendations to increase energy efficiency, improve environmental quality, and assure adequate, cost-effective energy supplies for the state.

A January 1994 Governor's executive order requires the strategy to be the policy framework for energy decisions made by state agencies. The state Energy Office is the lead agency and an interagency working group was created to pursue the most promising policy alternatives.

Placing the strategy into statute will give it more force.

Summary of Bill: Washington's Energy Strategy is the primary guidance for implementation of the state's energy policy.

The state Energy Office will take the lead and will cooperate with other state agencies in implementing the state energy strategy.

The content of the state Energy Office's biennial report is changed to consist of a report on the implementation of the state energy strategy and a report on other important energy issues.

The state Energy Office shall periodically review the strategy with the guidance of an advisory committee. After a public hearing on the committee's recommendations, the office shall provide a written report to the Governor and appropriate legislative committees.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: The strategy is a consensus document and, as such, represents a good foundation for state energy actions. Provisions in the strategy are the preferred ones for the state. The state Energy Office has realigned to be best able to implement the policies and programs of the strategy. The review provisions are useful to keep the strategy current.

Testimony Against: None.

Witnesses: (Pro) Senator Dean Sutherland, prime sponsor; Aaron Jones, Washington Rural Electric Cooperatives Association; George Caan, state Energy Office; Mike Tracy, Puget Sound Power and Light; and Tricia McKay, Washington Natural Gas.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Majority Report: Do pass as amended. Signed by 26 members: Representatives Sommers, Chair; Valle, Vice Chair; Silver, Ranking Minority Member; Carlson, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Appelwick; Ballasiotes; Basich; Cooke; Dellwo; Dorn; Dunshee; G. Fisher; Foreman; Jacobsen; Lemmon; Leonard; Linville; H. Myers; Peery; Rust; Sehlin; Sheahan; Stevens; Talcott; Wang and Wolfe.

Staff: Nancy Stevenson (786-7137).

Summary of Recommendation of Committee on Appropriations Compared to Recommendation of Committee on Energy & Utilities: Amendments are made which: 1) clarify the membership of an advisory committee when the Energy Office is updating the Energy Strategy; 2) direct that the advisory committee be terminated within three months after an energy strategy update is completed; and 3) specify the biennial report be submitted to appropriate committees of the Legislature rather than the entire Legislature.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: The review provisions are useful to keep the strategy current. The strategy is a meaningful consensus document and represents a good foundation for state energy actions.

Testimony Against: None.

Witnesses: (In favor) Senator Dean Sutherland, prime sponsor; Ted Bottiger, Northwest Power Planning Council; and George Caan, Washington State Energy Office.