

SENATE BILL REPORT

ESB 6493

AS PASSED SENATE, FEBRUARY 14, 1994

Brief Description: Integrating the state energy strategy into statute.

SPONSORS: Senators Sutherland, Amondson and Ludwig

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY & UTILITIES

Majority Report: Do pass as amended.

Signed by Senators Sutherland, Chairman; Ludwig, Vice Chairman; Amondson, Owen, A. Smith and Williams.

Staff: Scott Huntley (786-7421)

Hearing Dates: February 2, 1994; February 3, 1994

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY & UTILITIES

BACKGROUND:

In 1991, legislation was enacted which established the Washington Energy Strategy Committee, a broadly representative committee of public and private entities which was directed to develop a state energy strategy. In January 1993 this committee adopted, as its final report, the Washington Energy Strategy, An Invitation to Action. This document set forth principles and policy recommendations to increase energy efficiency, improve environmental quality, and assure adequate, cost-effective energy supplies for the state. The strategy was not developed to be a prescriptive document, but is intended to be a general guide for state and local governments, utilities and the public.

In January 1994 the Governor, in Executive Order 94-01, implemented the Washington State Energy Strategy and directed it to be the policy framework for energy decisions made by state agencies. The Governor directed that the Washington State Energy Office be the lead agency for this implementation, and that an interagency working group be created to review the recommendations of the energy strategy and pursue implementation of the most promising policy alternatives.

SUMMARY:

It is the policy of the state of Washington that the state energy strategy shall provide primary guidance for implementation of the state's energy policy.

The State Energy Office will cooperate with state agencies, governmental units, and private interests in the

prioritization and implementation of elements of the state energy strategy. The State Energy Office is the state agency responsible for coordinating the implementation of the energy strategy. The office will report to the Governor and Legislature by December 1 of each even-numbered year on the implementation of the strategy.

The State Energy Office is directed to review the strategy periodically with the guidance of an advisory committee. Any recommendations for revisions to the strategy will be conveyed in a written report to the Governor and appropriate legislative committees.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: requested January 27, 1994

TESTIMONY FOR:

The energy strategy is a framework for public decisionmaking. The strategy is the single most important responsibility of the Energy Office and should be referenced in statute. It is a useful policy guide for state agencies, regulators and energy providers. The energy strategy is a consensus document of guiding principles and distinct recommendations.

TESTIMONY AGAINST: None

TESTIFIED: PRO: Judith Merchant, State Energy Office; Mike Tracey, Puget Power; Patricia Mckay, Washington Natural Gas; Ron Newbry, Pacific Corp.

HOUSE AMENDMENT(S):

It is specified that the State Energy Office's biennial report be provided to appropriate legislative committees rather than the entire Legislature.

It is directed that the membership of the advisory committee for updating the energy strategy resemble the original energy strategy committee, rather than be created in the same manner as the original advisory committee. Any such advisory committee is to be terminated within three months after an energy strategy update is submitted to the Governor and Legislature.