

# HOUSE BILL ANALYSIS

## HB 1720

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**Title:** An Act relating to disclosure of costs to retail electrical customers.

**Brief Description:** Requiring electric utilities to disclose to customers the cost of salmon restoration and recovery efforts.

**Sponsors:** Representatives G. Chandler, Grant, Mulliken, Mastin, Sump, Murray, Schoesler and Esser.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TECHNOLOGY, TELECOMMUNICATIONS & ENERGY

*Meeting Date:* February 16, 1999

*Bill Analysis Prepared by:* Julia Harmatz, (786-7135)

***Background:***

Electricity generation and transmission have impacts on salmon and the environment such as upstream and downstream passage, water temperature, and water quality. There are costs associated with these impacts that are passed through to consumers of electricity.

Last session, the Legislature passed ESSB 2831, Chapter 287 of the Laws of Washington, 1998 is titled, Requiring Electric Utilities to Unbundle the Costs of Their Assets and Operations.– This legislation required the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission and the State Auditor to summarize information reported by electricity utilities and report to the legislature. On January 20, 1999, the agencies presented the results of the study to the Technology, Telecommunications & Energy Committee.

The agencies were directed to report among service quality and reliability reports, number of times consumers were without power, and alternate formats for disclosure of electricity attributes. Salmon costs were not discussed in these reports in particular, although disclosure of environmental effects of hydroelectric generation is mentioned. As per the Summary 3.5, page 21 of the Washington Electric Utility Service Quality, Reliability, Disclosure and Cost Report–, American Rivers and Green Mountain Energy have published draft

Low-Impact Hydro power criteria to review the following aspects of hydroelectric dams: fish, river flows, water quality, land protection, cultural resource protection and recreation.

***Summary:***

This bill requires utilities to disclose the costs of salmon restoration and recovery, and other environmental costs on electricity bills. Utilities are to provide costs to the nearest whole dollar. This bill also requires an explanation of these costs in the customer's bill on at least an annual basis.

***Appropriation:*** None.

***Fiscal Note:*** Not requested.

***Effective Date of Bill:*** Takes effect immediately.