

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2669

As Reported by House Committee On:
Technology, Telecommunications & Energy

Title: An act relating to use of animal waste as a qualified alternative energy resource.

Brief Description: Including animal waste as a qualified alternative energy resource.

Sponsors: Representatives Linville, Schoesler, Hunt, Chase and Wood.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Technology, Telecommunications & Energy: 2/5/02 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Includes animal waste as a type of biomass energy, which qualifies as an alternative energy resource for producing electricity that utilities may offer to retail customers as a "green option."

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TECHNOLOGY, TELECOMMUNICATIONS & ENERGY

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 19 members: Representatives Morris, Chair; Ruderman, Vice Chair; Crouse, Ranking Minority Member; Anderson, Berkey, Bush, Casada, DeBolt, Delvin, Esser, Hunt, Linville, Lysen, Nixon, Pflug, Reardon, Romero, Sullivan and Wood.

Staff: Pam Madson (786-7166); Ken Conte (786-7102).

Background:

In 2001 the Legislature enacted a requirement that by January 1, 2002, all electric utilities (other than small electric utilities) must offer their retail consumers, at least quarterly, a voluntary choice to purchase electricity generated from alternative energy resources. Alternative energy resources include wind, solar, geothermal, landfill gas, wave action, gases from wastewater treatment, and qualified hydro power. In addition, biomass energy based on organic fuels from wood, forest, or field residue, or dedicated energy crops, that doesn't include wood treated with chemical preservatives, is considered an alternative energy resource. Consumers who choose a "green option" may

pay a premium rate to support the generation of electricity from these sources.

There are a variety of sources of biomass energy. Generally, biomass energy utilizes the energy components of (1) agricultural residues from crops such as sugarcane, corn fiber and rice straw, (2) wood waste such as sawdust or timber slash, (3) energy crops such as fast growing trees (poplars, willows) and grasses (switch grass, elephant grass), and (4) methane from landfills, waste water treatment, and manure lagoons on cattle and hog farms to generate electricity, heat or fuels.

Summary of Bill:

Animal waste is included as a source of biomass energy that qualifies as an alternative energy resource. Utilities may offer their retail customers the option of purchasing electricity generated from a source using animal waste resources to satisfy the requirement that they offer retail customers an option (green option) to purchase electricity from an alternative energy resource.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not Requested.

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

Testimony For: Last year's bill requiring electric utilities to make electricity from alternative energy resources available did not include animal waste and this bill allows animal waste to be considered as a source of alternative energy. Not including animal waste in the last year's bill was an unintended omission. The dairy industry has been approached to build methane digesters and this bill offers a logical way to get rid of nutrients.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: (In support) Representative Linville, prime sponsor; Dave Warren, Last Mile Electric Co-op; and Chris Cheney, Washington State Dairy Federation.