
HOUSE BILL 2442

State of Washington

57th Legislature

2002 Regular Session

By Representatives Morris, Crouse, Reardon, DeBolt, Anderson, Esser and Pflug

Read first time 01/17/2002. Referred to Committee on Technology, Telecommunications & Energy.

1 AN ACT Relating to studying the functions of the utilities and
2 transportation commission to transfer them to existing agencies;
3 creating new sections; and providing an expiration date.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) It is the intent of the legislature to
6 encourage congruency among energy policy, technology policy, and
7 economic development policy in order to better serve the citizens of
8 Washington and to improve the economic climate and opportunities
9 throughout the state. This includes policies that support the
10 deployment of current and emerging technologies.

11 (2) It is further the intent of the legislature that energy and
12 telecommunications regulation reflect a less costly regulatory process
13 that can ultimately benefit the consumer, eliminate duplication of
14 functions, and improve government efficiency.

15 (3) It is further the intent of the legislature that the state
16 continue to support policies that produce affordable energy.

17 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1) A work group is established to develop
18 a restructuring plan to transfer functions currently performed by the

1 utilities and transportation commission to other appropriate existing
2 agencies. The work group will be composed of at least the following
3 state agency representatives:

4 (a) The director of the office of financial management;

5 (b) The secretary of the department of health;

6 (c) The director of the department of community, trade, and
7 economic development;

8 (d) The secretary of the department of transportation; and

9 (e) The director of the utilities and transportation commission.

10 (2) The work group must keep the following legislative members
11 informed of their deliberations through regular communication:

12 (a) The chair and ranking minority member of the senate economic
13 development and telecommunications committee and the senate
14 environment, energy, and water committee; and

15 (b) The chair and ranking minority member of the house of
16 representatives technology, telecommunications, and energy committee.

17 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** (1) The work group must develop a
18 restructuring plan to transfer those functions of the utilities and
19 transportation commission that it determines appropriate to existing
20 agencies. The goals of a restructuring plan are to:

21 (a) Enhance the ability to coordinate energy, telecommunications,
22 and economic development policy;

23 (b) Eliminate duplicate functions;

24 (c) Minimize costs of transition; and

25 (d) Reduce the number of full-time equivalent staff that transfer
26 to an agency from the utilities and transportation commission by ten
27 percent.

28 (2) In addition to an examination of functions performed by the
29 utilities and transportation commission, the work group must recommend
30 a restructuring plan that considers the following transfers:

31 (a) The regulation of energy, gas, and telecommunications functions
32 to the department of community, trade, and economic development;

33 (b) The regulation of water companies functions to the department
34 of health;

35 (c) Common carrier functions to the department of transportation;

36 (d) Solid waste, low-level radioactive waste disposal functions to
37 the department of ecology; and

1 (e) The functions relating to securities and transfers of property
2 by utilities to the attorney general.

3 (3) The completed restructuring plan must be submitted to the
4 governor and the appropriate standing committees of the legislature by
5 November 1, 2002.

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** (1) The work group must also examine the
7 rate-making process and determine whether efficiencies and reduced
8 costs to participants in the process can be gained in updating
9 procedures and process deadlines. In addition, the work group must
10 examine the role of the commissioners and administrative law judges to
11 determine whether efficiencies and cost savings can be made.

12 (2) The work group must consider whether consolidating the
13 operation of the regulatory functions with operation of the energy
14 policy division of the department of community, trade, and economic
15 development can result in efficiencies or savings.

16 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** This act expires July 1, 2003.

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