
SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 2845

State of Washington

57th Legislature

2002 Regular Session

By House Committee on Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives Morris, Crouse, Morell, Pflug, Ogden, Linville and Simpson)

Read first time 02/12/2002. Referred to Committee on .

1 AN ACT Relating to the utilities and transportation commission; and
2 creating new sections.

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

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

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

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

16 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1) The joint legislative audit and review
17 committee will conduct a performance audit of the utilities and
18 transportation commission focused on its responsibilities regarding

1 telecommunications, energy, and natural gas. The performance audit
2 will include, but not be limited to:

3 (a) An analysis of the roles and responsibilities of the commission
4 as outlined and prescribed in statute, regulations, and commission
5 rules and procedures. The joint committee may recommend changes that
6 should be made in the roles and responsibilities of the commission;

7 (b) An evaluation of the commission's activities and programs in
8 relationship to its strategic plan, performance goals, and program
9 outcomes;

10 (c) An analysis of the commission's organizational structure and
11 functions and the effect of that organizational structure on the
12 ability of the commission to perform its duties and responsibilities.
13 The analysis may include a comparison of other state commissions'
14 organizations, structures, and operating principles;

15 (d) Recommendations for improving the accountability and
16 performance of the utilities and transportation commission within the
17 framework of its current legislatively determined roles and
18 responsibilities.

19 (2) The joint committee may contract for consulting services in
20 conducting this performance audit.

21 (3) The joint committee may appoint temporary advisory committees,
22 as necessary, to assist the joint committee.

23 (4) The joint legislative audit and review committee shall modify
24 the scope of the audit in this section, to the extent necessary, to
25 limit the costs of the audit to conform to the level of funding
26 provided in section 3 of this act.

27 (5) In conducting the performance audit, the joint committee may
28 consult with representatives of regulated entities, with customers of
29 those regulated entities, and with other interested parties.

30 (6) A preliminary report of the performance audit must be submitted
31 to the appropriate legislative policy and fiscal committees by December
32 31, 2002, and must include the analysis of the commission's structure
33 and functions and a work plan for the remaining activities of the
34 performance audit. A final report must be submitted to the appropriate
35 legislative policy and fiscal committees by December 1, 2003. The
36 joint legislative audit and review committee may extend the report
37 deadlines up to one year subject to the committee's biennial work plan.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** Beginning July 1, 2002, through December 31,
2 2003, every electrical, gas, and telecommunications company subject to
3 a fee under RCW 80.24.010 will pay to the commission a surcharge for
4 the purpose of conducting a performance audit of the utilities and
5 transportation commission by the joint legislative audit and review
6 committee under section 2 of this act and calculated as a percentage of
7 the fee paid by each company under RCW 80.24.010. The surcharge
8 percentage will be the same for all companies. The amount recovered by
9 the surcharge imposed under this section will be sufficient to cover
10 the cost of the performance audit conducted under section 2 of this act
11 but the total amount that may be recovered by the surcharge must not
12 exceed four hundred thousand dollars.

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