
HOUSE BILL 1013

State of Washington 58th Legislature 2003 Regular Session

By Representatives Morris, Miloscia, Eickmeyer, Linville, Chase, Anderson, Ruderman, Mielke, Conway, Bush, Haigh and Sullivan

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1 AN ACT Relating to the utilities and transportation commission;
2 creating new sections; providing an effective date; and declaring an
3 emergency.

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) The joint legislative audit and review
18 committee will conduct a performance audit of the utilities and

1 transportation commission focused on its responsibilities regarding
2 telecommunications, energy, and natural gas. The performance audit
3 will include, but not be limited to:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

31 (6) A preliminary report of the performance audit must be submitted
32 to the appropriate legislative policy and fiscal committees by December
33 31, 2003, and must include the analysis of the commission's structure
34 and functions and a work plan for the remaining activities of the
35 performance audit. A final report must be submitted to the appropriate
36 legislative policy and fiscal committees by December 1, 2004. The
37 joint legislative audit and review committee may extend the report
38 deadlines up to one year subject to the committee's biennial work plan.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** Beginning July 1, 2003, through December 31,
2 2004, 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.

13 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** Section 3 of this act is necessary for the
14 immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or
15 support of the state government and its existing public institutions,
16 and takes effect July 1, 2003.

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