H-4329.1

HOUSE BILL 3143

State of Washington 58th Legislature 2004 Regular Session

By Representatives Morris, Nixon, Hudgins, Sullivan and Chase

Read first time 01/29/2004. Referred to Committee on Technology, Telecommunications & Energy.

AN ACT Relating to renewable energy and energy efficiency; and creating a new section.

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

NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that:

(1) Washington's utilities have been historical leaders in developing renewable hydroelectric energy and investing in energy efficiency. The state economy has greatly benefited from the strong foundation of low-cost hydroelectric generation as well as forward-looking investments in energy efficiency;

(2) Washington has a long tradition of energy policies that support energy efficiency and renewable energy development. These policies, which include financial incentives, have stimulated economic development, reduced operating costs for businesses, made industries more competitive, made homes more comfortable and efficient, reduced the energy burden of low-income households, and protected the environment;

(3) Washington utility green tariff programs have stimulated consumer interest and modest investments in renewable energy development;

(4) Uncertainty in the electric industry about the industry's long-term regulatory construct has shortened utility planning horizons and reduced the confidence of electric utilities to recover investments in energy conservation, system reliability, and new generation, including renewable energy resources;

(5) The 2003 northeast blackouts and western energy crisis of 2000-2001 demonstrated the vulnerability of an energy system reliant on transmission of electricity distant from load centers, increasingly strained water resources, and natural gas impacted by volatile market prices;

(6) Washington electric ratepayers will benefit from resource planning and acquisition that hedges against future fuel price risk by assisting utilities in developing a diverse portfolio of resources to meet customer needs; and

(7) Fuel diversity, economic, and environmental benefits from renewable energy and efficiency resources accrue to the public at large, and therefore all consumers and utilities should support consistent development of these resources to meet the state's electric demand and stabilize electricity prices.

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