

1013-S

Sponsor(s): House Committee on Technology, Telecommunications & Energy (originally sponsored by Representatives Morris, Miloscia, Eickmeyer, Linville, Chase, Anderson, Ruderman, Mielke, Conway, Bush, Haigh and Sullivan)

Brief Description: Requiring a performance audit of the utilities and transportation commission.

HB 1013-S.E - DIGEST

(AS OF HOUSE 2ND READING 2/12/04)

Declares that: (1) It is the intent of the legislature to encourage congruency among energy policy, technology policy, and economic development policy in order to better serve the citizens of Washington and to improve the economic climate and opportunities throughout the state. This includes policies that support the deployment of current and emerging technologies.

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

(3) It is further the intent of the legislature to work with the utilities and transportation commission to identify performance measures in the areas of energy and telecommunications regulation.

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

Directs the joint legislative audit and review committee to conduct a performance audit of the utilities and transportation commission focused on its responsibilities regarding telecommunications, energy, and natural gas. The performance audit will include, but not be limited to: (1) An analysis of the roles and responsibilities of the commission as outlined and prescribed in statute, regulations, and commission rules and procedures. The joint committee may recommend changes that should be made in the roles and responsibilities of the commission;

(2) An analysis of the commission's organizational structure and functions and the effect of that organizational structure on the ability of the commission to perform its duties and responsibilities. The analysis will include information on the costs of regulatory activities, the effects of the commission's structures and procedures on its decision timeliness, and how the commission seeks efficiencies in its regulatory activities. The analysis will also include a comparison of other state commissions' organizations, structures, and operating principles.

Provides that, beginning July 1, 2004, through December 31, 2005, every electrical, gas, and telecommunications company subject to a fee under RCW 80.24.010 will pay to the commission a surcharge for the purpose of conducting a performance audit of the utilities and transportation commission by the joint legislative audit and review committee and calculated as a percentage of the fee paid by each company under RCW 80.24.010.