
SENATE BILL 6897

State of Washington 60th Legislature 2008 Regular Session

By Senators Kline, Pridemore, Rockefeller, and Jacobsen

Read first time 01/31/08. Referred to Committee on Water, Energy & Telecommunications.

1 AN ACT Relating to assessing the state's geothermal resources for
2 electrical power production; and creating new sections.

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

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature finds that the Pacific
5 Northwest has unique geological features that include significant
6 geothermal resources, and that other states and provinces in this
7 region are actively exploring and developing these resources for energy
8 production purposes. The legislature further finds that existing data
9 and analyses of these resources is now largely outdated and that
10 advances in technology, increased energy prices, and increased interest
11 in low-carbon energy sources has increased interest by electric
12 utilities and independent power producers in the state's geothermal
13 resources.

14 (2) The legislature therefore intends to authorize a comprehensive
15 review of the state's geothermal resources and make recommendations
16 regarding policy measures to facilitate environmentally responsible
17 development of these resources for electric generation and concentrated
18 heating purposes.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1) The geothermal resource assessment
2 committee is created.

3 (2) The committee is composed of the following members:

4 (a) The commissioner of public lands, or the commissioner's
5 designee;

6 (b) The energy policy division of the department of community,
7 trade, and economic development;

8 (c) The chair of the energy facility site evaluation council;

9 (d) The state geologist within the department of natural resources;

10 (e) The chair of the utilities and transportation commission;

11 (f) Representatives of publicly owned and privately owned
12 utilities;

13 (g) Representatives of independent power producers;

14 (h) Representatives of geologists from academic, research, and
15 private sectors;

16 (i) Representatives of other interested sectors, including
17 agriculture, forestry, and environmental;

18 (j) Representatives of tribal governments with significant
19 geothermal resource interests; and

20 (k) Representatives of federal agencies with regulatory or land
21 management responsibilities relating to the development of geothermal
22 interests.

23 (3) The commissioner of public lands, or the commissioner's
24 designee, shall chair the committee. The commissioner of public lands
25 shall select the committee members described in subsection (2)(f)
26 through (k) of this section.

27 (4) The department of natural resources shall provide necessary
28 staff and administrative support to the committee.

29 (5) The committee shall conduct a comprehensive assessment of the
30 geothermal resources in the state and their potential for
31 environmentally responsible development for power production purposes.
32 The assessment must include at least the following:

33 (a) A characterization of the geothermal resources in the state and
34 the potential for development for electrical generation and
35 concentrated heating purposes based upon currently employed and
36 projected technologies;

37 (b) The economic implications of this development potential,

1 including community economic development, job creation, and state and
2 local revenue benefits, including an assessment for each county in the
3 state;

4 (c) A review of current lease payments on federal lands in the
5 state for geothermal leasing, described by county;

6 (d) A review of state lands with geothermal development potential;

7 (e) A review of the effect of the state's water resource laws and
8 policies on the development of geothermal resources; and

9 (f) Recommendations for legislative and administrative actions
10 based upon this assessment to encourage environmentally responsible
11 geothermal resource development in the state.

12 (6) The committee shall provide the assessment and recommendations
13 to the energy and fiscal committees of the senate and house of
14 representatives by December 1, 2008.

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