
Environment Committee

HB 2005

Brief Description: Defining municipal solid waste to be a renewable resource and electricity from certain waste to energy facilities to be an eligible renewable resource for the purposes of chapter 19.285 RCW, the energy independence act.

Sponsors: Representatives Ormsby, Crouse, Jacks, Morris and Ryu.

<p style="text-align: center;">Brief Summary of Bill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Allows electricity generated from a waste to energy facility that commenced operation after October 1, 1991 to qualify as an eligible renewable resource under Initiative 937.

Hearing Date: 1/26/12

Staff: Kara Durbin (786-7133).

Background:

The Energy Independence Act.

In 2006 the voters approved the Energy Independence Act (Initiative 937). Initiative 937 requires certain electric utilities with 25,000 or more customers to meet targets for energy conservation and for the use of eligible renewable resources.

Renewable Resources Targets.

Each qualifying utility must use eligible renewable resources or acquire equivalent renewable energy credits, or a combination of both, to meet the following annual targets:

- at least 3 percent of its load by January 1, 2012, and each year thereafter through December 31, 2015;
- at least 9 percent of its load by January 1, 2016, and each year thereafter through December 31, 2019; and

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- at least 15 percent of its load by January 1, 2020, and each year thereafter.

"Eligible renewable resource" includes: (1) wind; (2) solar; (3) geothermal energy; (4) landfill and sewage gas; (5) wave and tidal power; and (6) certain biomass and biodiesel fuels. In addition, the generating facility must have commenced operation after March 31, 1999 and be located in the Pacific Northwest. "Municipal solid waste" is not an eligible renewable resource.

Solid Waste.

Under the solid waste management laws, "solid waste" includes garbage, rubbish, ashes, industrial wastes, swill, sewage sludge, demolition and construction wastes, abandoned vehicles or parts thereof, and recyclable materials. A county may generate electricity from solid waste subject to meeting air quality permitting requirements. While no county is currently doing so, the city of Spokane has been generating electricity by burning solid waste since 1991.

Summary of Bill:

Electricity generated from a waste-to-energy facility that commences operation after October 1, 1991 is considered an eligible renewable resource under Initiative 937.

The definition of "renewable resource" is modified to include, rather than exclude, municipal solid waste.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.