

FINAL BILL REPORT

SSB 6044

C 246 L 12
Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Concerning the supply of water by public utility districts bordered by the Columbia river to be used in pumped storage projects.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Energy, Natural Resources & Marine Waters (originally sponsored by Senator Honeyford).

Senate Committee on Energy, Natural Resources & Marine Waters
House Committee on Agriculture & Natural Resources

Background: Public Utility Districts (PUDs). Formed in 1931 by Initiative 1, PUDs are municipal corporations authorized to provide electricity, water and sewer services, and wholesale telecommunications. There are 28 operating PUDs in Washington, 15 of which border the Columbia River. While PUDs are generally authorized to buy and sell electricity and water, they may not sell water to a privately owned utility for the production of electric energy.

Pumped Storage. Pumped storage projects generate electricity by moving water between two bodies of water at different elevations. During times of low electricity demand, less-expensive electricity is used to pump water to an upper reservoir, which is released during periods of high electricity demand to generate electricity in the same manner as a conventional hydropower facility.

Summary: Authorizing PUDs to Sell Water for Pumped Storage Projects. A PUD bordered by the Columbia River may supply any water, as authorized by a previously perfected water right under its control, to be used in a pumped storage generating facility. Among other conditions, contracts concerning the sale of these resources must be approved by a vote of a PUD's commissioners after a minimum of ten days public notice.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	44	0	
House	98	0	(House amended)
Senate	47	0	(Senate concurred)

Effective: June 7, 2012

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