
Technology & Economic Development Committee

ESSB 6187

Brief Description: Concerning the electrification of transportation.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Energy, Environment & Technology (originally sponsored by Senators Palumbo, Carlyle, McCoy, Hobbs, Wellman, Sheldon, Hawkins, Mullet, Conway and Brown).

Brief Summary of Engrossed Substitute Bill

- Authorizes the governing authority of a municipal electric utility or the commission of a public utility district to adopt an electrification of transportation plan.
- Authorizes the governing authority of a municipal electric utility or the commission of a public utility district to offer incentive programs in the electrification of transportation for its customers.

Hearing Date: 3/1/18

Staff: Nikkole Hughes (786-7156).

Background:

Municipal Electric Utilities and Public Utility Districts.

Municipalities are authorized to operate as utilities and set the rates and charges for the provision of water, sewer, electric power, heating fuel, solid waste removal, and transportation facility services. Public utility districts (PUD) are a type of special purpose district authorized for the purpose of generating and distributing electricity, providing water and sewer services, and providing telecommunications services. A PUD may operate on a countywide basis or may encompass a smaller jurisdiction. A PUD is governed by a board of either three or five elected commissioners.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Investor-Owned Utility Investment in Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment.

In establishing rates for privately-owned gas and electrical companies, the Utilities and Transportation Commission (UTC) must consider policies to improve access to and promote fair competition in the provision of electric vehicle supply equipment (EVSE) build-out. These policies may include, but are not limited to, allowing a rate of return on investment on capital expenditures for EVSE that is deployed for the benefit of ratepayers, provided that the capital expenditures do not increase costs to ratepayers in excess of 0.25 percent.

A rate of return on investment for EVSE build-out may only be allowed if the company chooses to pursue capital investment in EVSE on a fully regulated basis similar to other capital investments behind a customer's meter. The incentive rate of return is established by adding an increment of up to 2 percent to the rate of return on common equity permitted on the company's other investments.

The UTC was required to report to the Legislature by December 31, 2017 with regard to the use of any incentives allowed for EVSE, the quantifiable impacts of the incentives on actual electric vehicle deployment, and any recommendations to the Legislature about utility participation in the electric vehicle market.

Summary of Bill:

The governing board of a municipal electric utility or public utility district may adopt an electrification of transportation plan that, at a minimum, establishes a finding that utility outreach and investment in the electrification of transportation infrastructure is cost-effective, as determined using a methodology that assesses both the expected benefits and expected costs to ratepayers served by the utility.

In adopting an electrification of transportation plan, a governing board may consider some or all of the following:

- the applicability of multiple options for electrification of transportation across all customer classes;
- the impact of electrification on the utility's load;
- system reliability and distribution system efficiencies;
- interoperability concerns; and
- overall customer experience.

The governing board may, upon making a cost-effectiveness determination, offer incentive programs in the electrification of transportation for its customers. The incentive programs may not increase costs to ratepayers in excess of 0.25 percent.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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