
HOUSE BILL 2845

State of Washington

57th Legislature

2002 Regular Session

By Representatives Morris, Crouse, Morell, Pflug, Ogden, Linville and Simpson

Read first time 01/30/2002. Referred to Committee on Technology, Telecommunications & Energy.

1 AN ACT Relating to the utilities and transportation commission; and
2 creating new sections.

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

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) It is the intent of the legislature to
5 encourage congruency among energy policy, technology policy, and
6 economic development policy in order to better serve the citizens of
7 Washington and to improve the economic climate and opportunities
8 throughout the state. This includes policies that support the
9 deployment of current and emerging technologies.

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

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

16 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1) The joint legislative audit and review
17 committee will conduct a performance audit of the utilities and
18 transportation commission focused on its responsibilities regarding

1 telecommunications, energy, and natural gas. The performance audit
2 will include, but not be limited to:

3 (a) An analysis of the roles and responsibilities of the commission
4 as outlined and prescribed in statute, regulations, and commission
5 rules and procedures. The joint committee may recommend changes that
6 should be made in the roles and responsibilities of the commission;

7 (b) An evaluation of the commission's activities and programs in
8 relationship to its strategic plan, performance goals, and program
9 outcomes;

10 (c) An analysis of the commission's organizational structure and
11 functions and the effect of that organizational structure on the
12 ability of the commission to perform its duties and responsibilities.
13 The analysis may include a comparison of other state commissions'
14 organizations, structures, and operating principles;

15 (d) Recommendations for improving the accountability and
16 performance of the utilities and transportation commission within the
17 framework of its current legislatively determined roles and
18 responsibilities.

19 (2) The joint committee may contract for consulting services in
20 conducting this performance audit.

21 (3) The joint committee may appoint temporary advisory committees,
22 as necessary, to assist the joint committee.

23 (4) In conducting the performance audit, the joint committee may
24 consult with representatives of regulated entities, with customers of
25 those regulated entities, and with other interested parties.

26 (5) A preliminary report of the performance audit must be submitted
27 to the appropriate legislative policy and fiscal committees by December
28 31, 2002, and must include the analysis of the commission's structure
29 and functions and a work plan for the remaining activities of the
30 performance audit. A final report must be submitted to the appropriate
31 legislative policy and fiscal committees by December 1, 2003.

32 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** Beginning July 1, 2002, through December 31,
33 2003, every electrical, gas, and telecommunications company subject to
34 a fee under RCW 80.24.010 will pay to the commission a surcharge for
35 the purpose of conducting a performance audit of the utilities and
36 transportation commission by the joint legislative audit and review
37 committee under section 2 of this act and calculated as a percentage of
38 the fee paid by each company under RCW 80.24.010. The surcharge

1 percentage will be the same for all companies. The amount recovered by
2 the surcharge imposed under this section will be sufficient to cover
3 the cost of the performance audit conducted under section 2 of this act
4 but the total amount that may be recovered by the surcharge must not
5 exceed four hundred thousand dollars.

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