

RCW 19.405.010 Findings—Intent—2019 c 288. (1) The legislature finds that Washington must address the impacts of climate change by leading the transition to a clean energy economy. One way in which Washington must lead this transition is by transforming its energy supply, modernizing its electricity system, and ensuring that the benefits of this transition are broadly shared throughout the state.

(2) With our wealth of carbon-free hydropower, Washington has some of the cleanest electricity in the United States. But electricity remains a large source of emissions in our state. We are at a critical juncture for transforming our electricity system. It is the policy of the state to eliminate coal-fired electricity, transition the state's electricity supply to one hundred percent carbon-neutral by 2030, and one hundred percent carbon-free by 2045. In implementing this chapter, the state must prioritize the maximization of family-wage job creation, seek to ensure that all customers are benefiting from the transition to a clean energy economy, and provide safeguards to ensure that the achievement of this policy does not impair the reliability of the electricity system or impose unreasonable costs on utility customers.

(3) The transition to one hundred percent clean energy is underway, but must happen faster than our current policies can deliver. Absent significant and swift reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, climate change poses immediate significant threats to our economy, health, safety, and national security. The prices of clean energy technologies continue to fall, and are, in many cases, competitive or even cheaper than conventional energy sources.

(4) The legislature finds that Washington can accomplish the goals of chapter 288, Laws of 2019 while: Promoting energy independence; creating high quality jobs in the clean energy sector; maximizing the value of hydropower, our principal renewable resource; continuing to encourage and provide incentives for clean alternative energy sources, including providing electricity for the transportation sector; maintaining safe and reliable electricity to all customers at stable and affordable rates; and protecting clean air and water in the Pacific Northwest. Clean energy creates more jobs per unit of energy produced than fossil fuel sources, so this transition will contribute to job growth in Washington while addressing our climate crisis head on. Our abundance of renewable energy and our strong clean technology sector make Washington well positioned to be at the forefront of the transition to one hundred percent clean electricity.

(5) The legislature declares that utilities in the state have an important role to play in this transition, and must be fully empowered, through regulatory tools and incentives, to achieve the goals of this policy. In combination with new technology and emerging opportunities for customers, this policy will spur transformational change in the utility industry. Given these changes, the legislature recognizes and finds that the utilities and transportation commission's statutory grant of authority for rate making includes consideration and implementation of performance and incentive-based regulation, multiyear rate plans, and other flexible regulatory mechanisms where appropriate to achieve fair, just, reasonable, and sufficient rates and its public interest objectives.

(6) The legislature recognizes and finds that the public interest includes, but is not limited to: The equitable distribution of energy benefits and reduction of burdens to vulnerable populations and highly impacted communities; long-term and short-term public health,

economic, and environmental benefits and the reduction of costs and risks; and energy security and resiliency. It is the intent of the legislature that in achieving this policy for Washington, there should not be an increase in environmental health impacts to highly impacted communities.

(7) It is the intent of the legislature to provide flexible tools to address the variability of hydropower for compliance under chapter 288, Laws of 2019. [2019 c 288 s 1.]