

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5555

As of February 4, 2019

Title: An act relating to ensuring that components of solar energy systems are produced in the United States or according to Washington state environmental standards.

Brief Description: Ensuring that components of solar energy systems are produced in the United States or according to Washington state environmental standards.

Sponsors: Senator Ericksen.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Environment, Energy & Technology: 2/06/19.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Defines solar energy system under the Production Incentive Program and specifies components of a solar energy system must be produced or manufactured in the United States or according to Washington State environmental standards.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT, ENERGY & TECHNOLOGY

Staff: Kimberly Cushing (786-7421)

Background: Production Incentive Program. In 2005, the Legislature created a Cost-Recovery Program to promote renewable energy systems located in Washington that produce electricity from solar, wind, or anaerobic digesters.

In 2017, the Legislature closed the Cost-Recovery Program and established the Production Incentive Program. Beginning July 1, 2017, a person who owns a renewable energy system may apply to the Washington State University Energy Program for certification establishing the person's eligibility to receive annual production incentive payments from their utility. A program term lasts for eight years, or until the cumulative incentive payments for electricity produced reach 50 percent of the total system price for all renewable energy systems, whichever comes first.

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.

A "renewable energy system" is defined under the Production Incentive Program as a solar energy system, including a community solar project, an anaerobic digester, or a wind generator used for producing electricity.

Department of Ecology. The Department of Ecology (DOE) is Washington's environmental protection agency. DOE oversees environmental programs relating to air quality, hazardous waste and toxin reduction, toxic site cleanup, solid waste management, and water quality.

Summary of Bill: Defines Solar Energy System Under the Production Incentive Program. "Solar energy system," under the Production Incentive Program, is defined as any device or combination of devices or elements that rely upon direct sunlight as an energy source for use in generating electricity. All components of a solar energy system must be:

- entirely produced or manufactured in the United States; or
- produced or manufactured in a facility located outside the United States, but that is certified by DOE to meet all relevant Washington State environmental, health, and safety standards.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.