
HOUSE BILL 1117

State of Washington

68th Legislature

2023 Regular Session

By Representatives Mosbrucker, Dye, Leavitt, Schmidt, Christian, and Walsh

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1 AN ACT Relating to addressing the extent to which Washington
2 residents are at risk of rolling blackouts and power supply
3 inadequacy events; amending RCW 19.280.065; creating a new section;
4 and providing an expiration date.

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

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that the electric
7 grid is undergoing profound changes. Due to decreasing costs of
8 renewable generation and policies like the clean energy
9 transformation act, the grid is gradually evolving from one built to
10 deliver to the customer electricity from centralized electric
11 generation plants to one with variable energy resources like
12 windmills and solar panels dispersed geographically across a broad
13 landscape. As described in the 2021 Washington state energy strategy,
14 the grid that our region is transitioning to will require greater
15 transmission capacity and make greater use of energy storage and
16 customer-side resources to manage the generation on the supply side.

17 As clean electricity replaces fossil fuels in the state's
18 economy, the transmission and distribution infrastructure, the sticks
19 and wires of the grid, must meet increasingly complex service
20 requirements and loads. The changing demand includes, but is not
21 limited to, vehicle charging, serving other specialized technology

1 that requires high power quality, electrification of building-related
2 end uses now served by fossil fuels, electricity deployed on the
3 customer side of the meter through net metering, community solar
4 programs, and the growth of demand response programs.

5 Further, the clean energy transformation act requires that
6 utilities making investments in new resources after May 2019, rely on
7 energy efficiency, demand response, renewable resources, and energy
8 storage to the maximum extent feasible, while transitioning away from
9 coal and natural gas-fired generation. Electric utilities are
10 actively working to ensure resource adequacy through the development
11 of explicit resource adequacy standards and a standardized resource
12 adequacy program. This work is ongoing and should result in a binding
13 and enforceable program with a robust public oversight mechanism.
14 Understanding and addressing any energy adequacy challenges created
15 by a deeply decarbonized grid is key to keeping the state's supply of
16 electricity reliable.

17 **Sec. 2.** RCW 19.280.065 and 2020 c 63 s 2 are each amended to
18 read as follows:

19 (1) At least once every twelve months, the department and the
20 commission shall jointly convene a meeting of representatives of the
21 investor-owned utilities and consumer-owned utilities, regional
22 planning organizations, transmission operators, and other
23 stakeholders to discuss the current, short-term, and long-term
24 adequacy of energy resources to serve the state's electric needs, and
25 address specific steps the utilities can take to coordinate planning
26 in light of the significant changes to the Northwest's power system
27 including, but not limited to, technological developments,
28 retirements of legacy baseload power generation resources, and
29 changes in laws and regulations affecting power supply options. The
30 department and commission shall provide a summary of these meetings,
31 including any specific action items, to the governor and legislature
32 within sixty days of the meeting.

33 (2) In 2023, the meeting convened by the department and the
34 commission pursuant to subsection (1) of this section must
35 specifically address the extent to which Washington residents are at
36 risk of rolling blackouts and power supply inadequacy events.
37 Stakeholders must be surveyed for recommendations on policy options
38 to prevent severe blackouts. The meeting must also focus discussion
39 on the extent to which proposed laws and regulations seeking an

1 aggressive timeline for building electrification and transportation
2 system electrification may require new state policy for resource
3 adequacy. The stakeholder meeting should seek to identify regulatory
4 and statutory incentives to enhance and ensure resource adequacy and
5 reliability as the clean energy transition evolves.

6 (3) This section expires January 1, ((2025)) 2031.

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