
SENATE BILL 5129

State of Washington

68th Legislature

2023 Regular Session

By Senators MacEwen, Fortunato, Holy, Hunt, McCune, Mullet, and Short

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1 AN ACT Relating to planning for advanced nuclear reactor
2 technology in Washington; amending RCW 43.21F.088; and creating a new
3 section.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature reaffirms that
6 Washington needs to implement a comprehensive energy planning process
7 and that the state energy strategy developed and periodically
8 reviewed by the department of commerce is an important element of
9 that planning responsibility. The legislature has declared that a
10 successful state energy strategy must balance three goals:
11 Maintaining competitive energy prices that are fair and reasonable
12 for consumers and businesses and support our state's continued
13 economic success; increasing competitiveness by fostering a clean
14 energy economy and jobs through business and workforce development;
15 and meeting the state's obligations to reduce greenhouse gas
16 emissions.

17 (2) The legislature finds that planning for the development of
18 advanced nuclear reactor technology aligns with the legislature's
19 goals for a comprehensive energy strategy. Therefore, the legislature
20 intends for the state energy strategy to include consideration of

1 measures that will promote the development of advanced nuclear
2 reactor technology in Washington.

3 (3) The legislature further finds that advanced nuclear reactor
4 technology is a nonemitting electricity generation resource that can
5 help Washington meet its long-term emissions reduction goals for the
6 electricity sector. The field of nuclear technology is rapidly
7 evolving as new innovations are made, and the legislature concludes
8 that the state should examine the various ways advanced nuclear
9 reactor technology will support the state's energy infrastructure and
10 economy in the future.

11 (4) Furthermore, the legislature recognizes the challenges
12 presented by years of inaction on the management of spent nuclear
13 fuel. Therefore, the legislature directs the department of commerce
14 to actively seek federal support to address this long-standing issue.

15 **Sec. 2.** RCW 43.21F.088 and 2010 c 271 s 403 are each amended to
16 read as follows:

17 (1) The state shall use the following principles to guide
18 development and implementation of the state's energy strategy and to
19 meet the goals of RCW 43.21F.010:

20 (a) Pursue all cost-effective energy efficiency and conservation
21 as the state's preferred energy resource, consistent with state law;

22 (b) Ensure that the state's energy system meets the health,
23 welfare, and economic needs of its citizens with particular emphasis
24 on meeting the needs of low-income and vulnerable populations;

25 (c) Maintain and enhance economic competitiveness by ensuring an
26 affordable and reliable supply of energy resources and by supporting
27 clean energy technology innovation, access to clean energy markets
28 worldwide, and clean energy business and workforce development;

29 (d) Reduce dependence on fossil fuel energy sources through
30 improved efficiency and development of cleaner energy sources, such
31 as bioenergy, low carbon energy sources, advanced nuclear reactor
32 technology, and natural gas, and leveraging the indigenous resources
33 of the state for the production of clean energy;

34 (e) Improve efficiency of transportation energy use through
35 advances in vehicle technology, increased system efficiencies,
36 development of electricity, biofuels, and other clean fuels, and
37 regional transportation planning to improve transportation choices;

1 (f) Meet the state's statutory greenhouse gas limits and
2 environmental requirements as the state develops and uses energy
3 resources;

4 (g) Build on the advantage provided by the state's clean regional
5 electrical grid by expanding and integrating additional carbon-free
6 and carbon-neutral generation, and improving the transmission
7 capacity serving the state;

8 (h) Make state government a model for energy efficiency, use of
9 clean and renewable energy, and greenhouse gas-neutral operations;
10 and

11 (i) Maintain and enhance our state's existing energy
12 infrastructure.

13 (2) The department shall:

14 (a) During energy shortage emergencies, give priority in the
15 allocation of energy resources to maintaining the public health,
16 safety, and welfare of the state's citizens and industry in order to
17 minimize adverse impacts on their physical, social, and economic
18 well-being;

19 (b) Develop and disseminate impartial and objective energy
20 information and analysis, while taking full advantage of the
21 capabilities of the state's institutions of higher education,
22 national laboratory, and other organizations with relevant expertise
23 and analytical capabilities;

24 (c) Actively seek to maximize federal and other nonstate funding
25 and support to the state for energy efficiency, renewable energy,
26 emerging energy technologies, management of spent nuclear fuel, and
27 other activities of benefit to the state's overall energy future; and

28 (d) Monitor the actions of all agencies of the state for
29 consistent implementation of the state's energy policy including
30 applicable statutory policies and goals relating to energy supply and
31 use.

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