

**SENATE BILL REPORT**

**SB 5877**

**AS REPORTED BY COMMITTEE ON ENERGY & UTILITIES, MARCH 5, 1991**

**Brief Description:** Requiring electric utilities to provide information on the effects of electric and magnetic fields.

**SPONSORS:** Senators Thorsness, Talmadge and A. Smith.

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY & UTILITIES**

**Majority Report:** That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5877 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Thorsness, Chairman; Saling, Vice Chairman; Nelson, Patterson, Roach, and Williams.

**Staff:** Phil Moeller (786-7445)

**Hearing Dates:** March 1, 1991; March 5, 1991

**BACKGROUND:**

Potential effects of electric and magnetic fields have received increased attention the past several years. Several major research projects are in progress throughout the nation. A great deal of uncertainty exists as to the effects of these fields.

**SUMMARY:**

Cities distributing electricity, public utility districts, and investor-owned electric utilities are directed to develop public information programs to inform customers of the nature and presence of electric and magnetic fields. Programs must include the opportunity for a residential inspection to determine the exposure to electric and magnetic fields or information about obtaining a residential inspection. Costs for these programs may be deducted from a utility's gross revenue for the purpose of paying the public utility tax. The Utilities and Transportation Commission is directed to provide a mechanism for cost recovery of these programs for investor-owned electric utilities.

**EFFECT OF PROPOSED SUBSTITUTE:**

Clarifications are added to eliminate the requirement that investor-owned electric utilities use billing inserts to carry out a public information program.

The section allowing the public utility tax deduction for utility expenses related to this legislation is deleted.

**Appropriation:** none

**Revenue:** none

**Fiscal Note:** requested March 1, 1991

**TESTIMONY FOR:**

This type of information program should help to inform citizens in a non-emotional manner. Several utilities already conduct similar programs.

**TESTIMONY AGAINST:** None

**TESTIFIED:** Tom Manley, Virginia Wilhelmi, CAOPL (pro); Ron Newbry, Pacific Power (pro); Henry Yates, Seattle City Light; Mike Tracy, Puget Power