

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 6146

As Passed House:

March 4, 2004

Title: An act relating to encouraging renewable energy and energy efficiency businesses in Washington.

Brief Description: Encouraging renewable energy and energy efficiency businesses in Washington.

Sponsors: By Senate Committee on Natural Resources, Energy & Water (originally sponsored by Senators Fraser, Morton, Esser, Eide, Winsley, Kohl-Welles, Keiser and Kline).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Technology, Telecommunications & Energy: 2/24/04, 2/27/04 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 3/4/04, 95-0.

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Directs the Washington Technology Center, through its Northwest Energy Technology Collaborative, to develop a statewide strategy for the development and promotion of renewable energy and energy efficiency sectors.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TECHNOLOGY, TELECOMMUNICATIONS & ENERGY

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 16 members: Representatives Morris, Chair; Ruderman, Vice Chair; Sullivan, Vice Chair; Crouse, Ranking Minority Member; Nixon, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Anderson, Blake, Bush, Delvin, Hudgins, Kirby, McMahan, Romero, Tom, Wallace and Wood.

Staff: Pam Madson (786-7166).

Background:

According to a recent report issued by the Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development (CTED), the renewable energy and energy efficiency sectors in

Washington currently generate close to \$1 billion in annual revenues and employ over 3,800 people. The report also explores how these sectors are likely to react to current market conditions and public policies, and concludes that the long-term prospects show strong potential for future growth.

The Washington Technology Center (WTC) is a collaborative effort between the state's universities, private industry, and government housed at the University of Washington. The statutory mission of the WTC includes performing and commercializing research on a statewide basis that benefits the intermediate and long-term economic vitality of the state. The WTC recently created a Northwest Energy Technology Collaborative of business, government, nonprofit, industry, and educational institutions to accelerate the emergence and growth of the energy technology industry in the Pacific Northwest region.

Summary of Bill:

Legislative findings outline the many benefits the state derives from its renewable energy and energy efficiency sectors and the Legislature declares its intent to establish the state as a leader in clean energy research, development, manufacturing, and marketing.

The Washington Technology Center (WTC) is directed to use its existing Northwest Energy Technology Collaborative project to provide a forum for public and private collaborative initiatives to promote renewable energy and energy efficiency sectors in Washington and the Pacific Northwest.

The WTC's responsibilities include using the collaborative project to develop and implement a strategic plan for public and private sector collaboration in renewable energy and energy efficiency business development. A process for developing the strategic plan, addressing necessary elements, and reporting back to the Governor and the Legislature are specified. The strategic plan may be incorporated into the five year strategic plan required for the WTC.

Renewable energy and energy efficiency are specifically included within the scope of technology as it relates to the responsibilities and functions of the WTC.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available on original Senate bill.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: There is a lot of competition among states to be the leader in the

renewable energy industry. The global market for renewable energy is large. Washington has significant potential to retain our existing energy technology industry and expand this sector. Washington also has the foundation on which to build a clean energy industry. Washington is not the only state that sees the opportunities for this sector. Other states are moving aggressively toward establishing their states as leaders in energy technology. A follow-up study indicates that in the near term, the potential is greatest in "smart" energy. The Northwest has a strong base in this technology and can support the further development of this energy cluster. Renewable energy and energy efficiency is an industry that is distributed across the state. The direction in this bill is an appropriate task for the Washington Technology Center.

Testimony Against: None.

Persons Testifying: Senator Fraser, prime sponsor; Tony Usibelli, Community Trade and Economic Development; Rys Roth, Climate Solutions; Toni Potter, League of Women Voters; and Lee Cheatum, Washington Technology Center.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.