

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 6763

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As of February 02, 2006

**Title:** An act relating to encouraging the use of hydroelectric power as a renewable energy resource.

**Brief Description:** Encouraging the use of hydroelectric power as a renewable energy resource.

**Sponsors:** Senators Parlette, Sheldon, Mulliken, Delvin and Poulsen.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Water, Energy & Environment: 2/2/06.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON WATER, ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT

**Staff:** William Bridges (786-7424)

**Background:** The Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development annually reports the fuel mix for the electric utilities in the state. According to the 2004 fuel mix report, 66 percent of the electricity sold to retail customers was hydroelectricity. The report uses the following definition of hydroelectric generation: "a power source created when water flows from a higher elevation to a lower elevation and the flow is converted to electricity in one or more generators at a single facility."

**Summary of Bill:** A declaration is made that it is the policy of the state to recognize hydroelectric power as a renewable energy resource and to encourage its use.

Various findings are made, including that hydroelectric power is abundant, and that hydroelectric power balances the needs of the environment with the need for clean, nonpolluting, reliable, and abundant electricity.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

**Committee/Commission/Task Force Created:** No.

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

**Testimony For:** Over 70 percent of the state's power is hydroelectricity, which is clean and renewable. It produces no CO2 or other greenhouse gases. It is the perfect partner to solar or wind power. Washington leads the nation in hydro power. The mid-Columbia Habitat Conservation Plans has successfully met the challenge of protecting migrating fish. This bill is simple; it declares that hydro power is a renewable resource that should be considered in any discussion about renewable portfolio standards.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Who Testified:** PRO: Sen. Parlette, prime sponsor; Chris McCabe, AWB; Andrew Munro, Chelan PUD.