

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SB 5383

As Reported by House Committee On:
Technology, Energy & Communications

Title: An act relating to the energy freedom program.

Brief Description: Modifying provisions of the energy freedom program.

Sponsors: Senators Hargrove, Poulsen, Hatfield, Rockefeller, Rasmussen and Kohl-Welles.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Technology, Energy & Communications: 3/21/07, 3/28/07 [DPA].

Brief Summary of Bill
(As Amended by House Committee)

- Allows non-profit corporations to apply for assistance from the Energy Freedom Program.
- Expands the Energy Freedom Program to include wind projects of up to five megawatts.
- Moves the Energy Freedom Program from the Department of Agriculture to the Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TECHNOLOGY, ENERGY & COMMUNICATIONS

Majority Report: Do pass as amended. Signed by 11 members: Representatives Morris, Chair; McCoy, Vice Chair; Crouse, Ranking Minority Member; McCune, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Eddy, Ericksen, Hankins, Hudgins, Hurst, Takko and VanDeWege.

Staff: Kara Durbin (786-7133).

Background:

[Energy Freedom Program](#)

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

In 2006, the Legislature created the Energy Freedom Program within the Department of Agriculture. The Energy Freedom Program provides financial and technical assistance to public entities for: (1) the construction of facilities to convert farm products or wastes into electricity, gaseous or liquid fuels, or other co-products; and (2) the construction of facilities used to store or distribute such feedstocks or products. The amount of assistance allowed under the Energy Freedom Program is limited to no more than 50 percent of the total cost of the project, up to \$5 million.

Eight projects were awarded assistance under the Energy Freedom Program. Six of the projects support oilseed processing for biodiesel; two of the projects support anaerobic digestion.

Summary of Amended Bill:

Non-profit or not-for-profit corporations may apply for assistance from the Energy Freedom Program. Assistance may be awarded for wind power projects of up to five megawatts.

The Energy Freedom Program is moved from the Department of Agriculture to the Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development.

Amended Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The amended bill strikes the provisions of the underlying bill. Non-profit and not-for-profit corporations may apply for funding from the Energy Freedom Program. The scope of the Energy Freedom Program is expanded to include wind projects of up to five megawatts. The Energy Freedom Program is moved from the Department of Agriculture to the Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) A coastal energy project operated by a community action agency is unique because the profits are redirected back into low-income assistance. This project could generate approximately \$600,000 of revenue a year for low-income programs over the next 25 years. This project would provide a sustainable energy resource to address the unmet needs in our community. By helping community action agencies generate income from a wind project, the Legislature can promote renewable energy and assist low-income families. It is a win-wind solution.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Senator Hargrove, prime sponsor; and Craig Dublanko, Coastal Community Action Program.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.