
HOUSE BILL 1623

State of Washington

67th Legislature

2022 Regular Session

By Representatives Mosbrucker, Fitzgibbon, Leavitt, Ryu, Duerr, Graham, Wicks, Callan, Fey, Paul, Ramos, Wylie, Slatter, Kloba, and Harris-Talley

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1 AN ACT Relating to addressing the extent to which Washington
2 residents are at risk of rolling blackouts and power supply
3 inadequacy events; amending RCW 19.280.065; creating a new section;
4 and providing an expiration date.

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

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that states such as
7 Texas and California recently experienced decreased power supply
8 reliability and rolling blackouts due to weather events, inadequate
9 dispatchable generating resources, and other factors. Several studies
10 have shown that the Northwest will experience a large energy capacity
11 shortfall by 2030.

12 The legislature finds that the electric grid is undergoing
13 profound changes. The grid is changing from one built to deliver to
14 the customer electricity from centralized electric generation plants
15 to one with intermittent energy resources like windmills and solar
16 panels dispersed geographically across a broad landscape. The
17 generating resources on the old grid could be turned up or down, on
18 or off as required. The new grid cannot, without extensive energy
19 storage, be turned up or down in response to customer demand.

20 The transmission and distribution infrastructure, the sticks and
21 wires of the grid, are being asked to meet increasingly complex

1 service requirements and loads. The changing demand includes, but is
2 not limited to, vehicle charging, serving other specialized
3 technology that requires high power quality, electrification of
4 natural gas utility services, electricity deployed on the customer
5 side of the meter through net metering, community solar programs, and
6 the growth of demand response programs.

7 Further, the clean energy transformation act requires that
8 utilities making investments in new resources after May of 2019, rely
9 on renewable resources and energy storage to the maximum extent
10 feasible, while transitioning away from dispatchable coals and
11 natural gas fired generation. Current law provides no policy guidance
12 or value propositions for replacing thermal generation like coal and
13 natural gas fired plants with storage resources that can store and
14 redispatch renewable energy. The region needs to maintain and
15 increase firm dispatchable capacity and related ancillary services to
16 address the energy adequacy challenges created by a deeply
17 decarbonized grid.

18 **Sec. 2.** RCW 19.280.065 and 2020 c 63 s 2 are each amended to
19 read as follows:

20 (1) At least once every twelve months, the department and the
21 commission shall jointly convene a meeting of representatives of the
22 investor-owned utilities and consumer-owned utilities, regional
23 planning organizations, transmission operators, and other
24 stakeholders to discuss the current, short-term, and long-term
25 adequacy of energy resources to serve the state's electric needs, and
26 address specific steps the utilities can take to coordinate planning
27 in light of the significant changes to the Northwest's power system
28 including, but not limited to, technological developments,
29 retirements of legacy baseload power generation resources, and
30 changes in laws and regulations affecting power supply options. The
31 department and commission shall provide a summary of these meetings,
32 including any specific action items, to the governor and legislature
33 within sixty days of the meeting.

34 (2) In 2022, the meeting convened by the department and the
35 commission pursuant to subsection (1) of this section must
36 specifically address the extent to which Washington residents are at
37 risk of rolling blackouts and power supply inadequacy events.
38 Stakeholders must be surveyed for recommendations on policy options
39 to prevent severe blackouts. The meeting must also focus discussion

1 on the extent to which proposed laws and regulations seeking an
2 aggressive timeline for building electrification and transportation
3 system electrification may require new state policy for resource
4 adequacy. The stakeholder meeting should seek to identify regulatory
5 and statutory incentives to enhance and ensure resource adequacy and
6 reliability as the clean energy transition evolves.

7 (3) This section expires January 1, (~~2025~~) 2030.

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