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**SENATE BILL 5129**

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**State of Washington 68th Legislature 2023 Regular Session**

**By** Senators MacEwen, Fortunato, Holy, Hunt, McCune, Mullet, and Short

AN ACT Relating to planning for advanced nuclear reactor technology in Washington; amending RCW 43.21F.088; and creating a new section.

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

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) The legislature reaffirms that Washington needs to implement a comprehensive energy planning process and that the state energy strategy developed and periodically reviewed by the department of commerce is an important element of that planning responsibility. The legislature has declared that a successful state energy strategy must balance three goals: Maintaining competitive energy prices that are fair and reasonable for consumers and businesses and support our state's continued economic success; increasing competitiveness by fostering a clean energy economy and jobs through business and workforce development; and meeting the state's obligations to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

(2) The legislature finds that planning for the development of advanced nuclear reactor technology aligns with the legislature's goals for a comprehensive energy strategy. Therefore, the legislature intends for the state energy strategy to include consideration of measures that will promote the development of advanced nuclear reactor technology in Washington.

(3) The legislature further finds that advanced nuclear reactor technology is a nonemitting electricity generation resource that can help Washington meet its long-term emissions reduction goals for the electricity sector. The field of nuclear technology is rapidly evolving as new innovations are made, and the legislature concludes that the state should examine the various ways advanced nuclear reactor technology will support the state's energy infrastructure and economy in the future.

(4) Furthermore, the legislature recognizes the challenges presented by years of inaction on the management of spent nuclear fuel. Therefore, the legislature directs the department of commerce to actively seek federal support to address this long-standing issue.

**Sec.**  RCW 43.21F.088 and 2010 c 271 s 403 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) The state shall use the following principles to guide development and implementation of the state's energy strategy and to meet the goals of RCW 43.21F.010:

(a) Pursue all cost-effective energy efficiency and conservation as the state's preferred energy resource, consistent with state law;

(b) Ensure that the state's energy system meets the health, welfare, and economic needs of its citizens with particular emphasis on meeting the needs of low-income and vulnerable populations;

(c) Maintain and enhance economic competitiveness by ensuring an affordable and reliable supply of energy resources and by supporting clean energy technology innovation, access to clean energy markets worldwide, and clean energy business and workforce development;

(d) Reduce dependence on fossil fuel energy sources through improved efficiency and development of cleaner energy sources, such as bioenergy, low carbon energy sources, advanced nuclear reactor technology, and natural gas, and leveraging the indigenous resources of the state for the production of clean energy;

(e) Improve efficiency of transportation energy use through advances in vehicle technology, increased system efficiencies, development of electricity, biofuels, and other clean fuels, and regional transportation planning to improve transportation choices;

(f) Meet the state's statutory greenhouse gas limits and environmental requirements as the state develops and uses energy resources;

(g) Build on the advantage provided by the state's clean regional electrical grid by expanding and integrating additional carbon-free and carbon‑neutral generation, and improving the transmission capacity serving the state;

(h) Make state government a model for energy efficiency, use of clean and renewable energy, and greenhouse gas-neutral operations; and

(i) Maintain and enhance our state's existing energy infrastructure.

(2) The department shall:

(a) During energy shortage emergencies, give priority in the allocation of energy resources to maintaining the public health, safety, and welfare of the state's citizens and industry in order to minimize adverse impacts on their physical, social, and economic well-being;

(b) Develop and disseminate impartial and objective energy information and analysis, while taking full advantage of the capabilities of the state's institutions of higher education, national laboratory, and other organizations with relevant expertise and analytical capabilities;

(c) Actively seek to maximize federal and other nonstate funding and support to the state for energy efficiency, renewable energy, emerging energy technologies, management of spent nuclear fuel, and other activities of benefit to the state's overall energy future; and

(d) Monitor the actions of all agencies of the state for consistent implementation of the state's energy policy including applicable statutory policies and goals relating to energy supply and use.

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