Washington State
House of Representatives
Office of Program Research

BILL ANALYSIS

Environment & Energy Committee

HB 2090

Brief Description: Integrating advanced nuclear energy into the state energy strategy.

Sponsors: Representatives Barnard, Fitzgibbon, Reed, Leavitt, Parshley, Zahn, Hall, Ley and Simmons.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the Department of Commerce to supplement the state energy strategy creating a nuclear power strategic framework.

Hearing Date: 1/13/26

Staff: Jacob Lipson (786-7196).

Background:

The Department of Commerce (Commerce) is required to publish a state energy strategy that balances goals of:

- maintaining competitive energy prices that are fair and reasonable for consumers and businesses, and support the 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.

The state energy strategy, which was last published in 2021, is required to be reviewed by Commerce at least once every eight years. Commerce must establish an energy strategy advisory committee of specified membership to provide guidance in reviewing the state energy strategy.

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

Summary of Bill:

The Department of Commerce (Commerce) must supplement the state energy strategy by developing and publishing a nuclear power strategic framework (framework) by December 15, 2026. This requirement takes effect only if Commerce receives gifts, grants, or contributions that cover Commerce's costs in developing and publishing the framework. Commerce must solicit guidance from members of the energy strategy advisory committee convened for the 2021 state energy strategy, and provide opportunities for public input prior to finalizing the framework. Commerce must integrate the framework into its next review and update of the state energy strategy.

The framework must:

- identify state objectives for developing new fission nuclear power generation, and key actions for government entities, utilities, and others to ensure the achievement of those objectives;
- outline the processes to be navigated prior to new fission nuclear power sources being built and operated;
- assess challenges and opportunities;
- consider how strategic partnerships with nearby states can facilitate new nuclear generation;
- consider policy recommendations, which may include regulatory reforms, tax and financial supports, and education and workforce programs; and
- identify the expected impacts of the successful development of new nuclear fission generation on economic wellbeing, workforce development, and goals for the electric sector, such as reliability and affordability.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 5, 2026.

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