

Commission to Study Energy Infrastructure

PL 2009, Chapter 372 (LD 1485)

Part F, Sec. F-4

Sec. F-4. Commission established. The Commission to Study Energy Infrastructure, referred to in this section as "the commission," is established.

1. Membership. The commission consists of 13 members appointed as follows:

A. Three members of the Senate appointed by the President of the Senate, including members from each of the 2 parties holding the largest number of seats in the Legislature;

B. Five members of the House of Representatives appointed by the Speaker of the House, including members from each of the 2 parties holding the largest number of seats in the Legislature; and

C. Five members appointed by the Governor.

2. Chairs. The first-named Senate member is the Senate chair and the first-named House of Representatives member is the House chair of the commission.

3. Appointments; convening. All appointments must be made no later than 30 days following the effective date of this section. The appointing authorities shall notify the Executive Director of the Legislative Council once all appointments have been completed. Within 15 days after appointment of all members, the chairs shall call and convene the first meeting of the commission.

4. Duties; corridors; plan. The commission shall examine the feasibility and effects of the State entering into agreements for leasing or otherwise allowing the use of state-owned lands or assets, including submerged lands, the rights-of-way of the state highway system, the federal interstate highway system, state-owned or state-controlled rail corridors or other state transportation corridors, for the installation of lines, cables, pipelines or other structures for the transmission of energy resources, communication transmission systems or related facilities. The commission shall develop a plan governing such agreements that addresses at least the following:

A. Appropriate valuation, pricing and allocation methodologies to maximize the long-term public value through the most efficient and effective use of the state-owned lands and assets; and

B. The potential effect of such agreements on renewable energy development in the State, on the development of other energy projects in the State, including but not limited to liquefied natural gas terminals, on energy consumers and ratepayers and on natural resources and the environment.

The commission shall also examine the policy issues relating to the construction or installation in this State of energy facilities greater than 75 miles in length. The commission shall evaluate the need for changes in methods of taxation to ensure protection of the public health, safety and welfare.

In developing the plan, the commission shall review and analyze relevant reports and information, including but not limited to the information, analysis and results of the New England States Regional Energy Blueprint being prepared by ISO-NE for the New England Governors and the New England States' Committee on Electricity. The commission shall also examine and monitor proposed or pending federal energy legislation that may significantly affect energy policy in this State. The commission may also consider ways in which the State's electric transmission systems, including new lines, system upgrades or the development of a smart-grid, or the development of natural gas systems, including pipelines and liquefied natural gas terminals, can help the State achieve its energy goals.

5. Staff; consultants; other assistance. The Legislative Council shall provide staffing services to the commission. The commission shall seek input from relevant agencies, stakeholders and persons with expertise. All agencies with relevant expertise shall provide technical or other assistance requested by the commission. The commission may retain consultants and other experts to assist the commission in its work.

6. Report. No later than December 2, 2009, the commission shall submit a report that includes its findings and recommendations, including suggested legislation, for presentation to the Second Regular Session of the 124th Legislature. The Joint Standing Committee on Utilities and Energy may submit a bill related to the subject matter of the report to the Second Regular Session of the 124th Legislature after receipt of the report.