

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## ESB 6631

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As Passed Senate, February 7, 1996

**Title:** An act relating to exempting thermal energy companies from utilities and transportation commission authority.

**Brief Description:** Exempting thermal energy companies from utilities and transportation commission authority.

**Sponsors:** Senators Sutherland, West, Finkbeiner, Loveland, Heavey, Rasmussen, Hochstatter, Strannigan and Morton.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Energy, Telecommunications & Utilities: 1/23/96 [DP].  
Passed Senate, 2/7/96, 49-0.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY, TELECOMMUNICATIONS & UTILITIES

**Majority Report:** Do pass.

Signed by Senators Sutherland, Chair; Loveland, Vice Chair; Finkbeiner, Hochstatter and Owen.

**Staff:** Phil Moeller (786-7445)

**Background:** The Legislature enacted measures in 1983 and 1987 intended to promote the use of district heating, including clarifying that this service is subject to only minimal regulation by the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (WUTC). With recent changes to regulations pertaining to cooling systems, there is renewed interest in promoting district cooling. District heating and cooling services are now termed "thermal energy services" in the industry. The WUTC has not used the existing laws to regulate district heating.

**Summary of Bill:** Sections allowing minimal regulation of district heating by the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission are repealed.

It is clarified that the WUTC is not authorized to regulate the rates or services of thermal energy companies.

The definition of "waste heat" is clarified as it pertains to state agencies or school districts selling energy or waste heat.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

**Testimony For:** These statutes are no longer needed in this competitive energy marketplace.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Testified:** PRO: Collins Sprague, Ken Boni, WA Water Power Co.; Steve King, WUTC; James Young, Seattle Steam Co.; Kathleen Collins, Sheet Metal and Air Conditioning Contractors.