
State Government Committee

HB 2702

Brief Description: Requiring state use of hybrid vehicles.

Sponsors: Representatives Morris, Crouse, Wallace, Sullivan, Nixon, Romero, Blake, Tom, Ruderman, Moeller, Chase, Rockefeller, Upthegrove, Wood and Kagi.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires half of planned new vehicle purchases made by the Department of General Administration (GA) to be electric hybrid vehicles, vehicles that use alternative fuels, or a combination of both, for the period July 1, 2004 through June 30, 2009.

Hearing Date: 1/27/04

Staff: Marsha Reilly (786-7135).

Background:

The Department of General Administration (GA) is responsible for purchasing vehicles for the state motor pool. In purchasing vehicles, the GA must comply with the Energy Policy Act of 1992 (EP Act). The EP Act was passed by Congress to reduce the nation's dependence on imported petroleum by requiring certain fleets to acquire alternative fuel vehicles which are capable of operating on non-petroleum fuels. The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) administers the regulations.

As of 2001, 75 percent of new light duty vehicle purchases made by state fleets must be alternative fuel vehicles. Light duty vehicles are, generally, passenger cars. Excluded are law enforcement, emergency, and non-road vehicles. The DOE approved list of alternative fuels includes:

- Methanol, ethanol, and other alcohols;
- Blends of 85 percent or more of alcohol with gasoline;
- Natural gas and liquid fuels domestically produced from natural gas;
- Liquefied petroleum gas (propane);
- Coal-derived liquid fuels;
- Hydrogen and electricity;
- Biodiesel (B100); and
- P-series (three blends of methyltetrahydrofuran, ethanol, and hydrocarbon).

Each of these alternative fuels results in a reduction of ozone-forming tailpipe emissions.

Currently, the state motor pool fleet consists of about 1400 vehicles. Approximately 75 percent of these vehicles are flex-fuel and can be fueled by ethanol and/or gasoline. The electric hybrid cars in the motor pool use gasoline and, therefore, do not meet the DOE requirements. Because ethanol is not currently available in this state, the motor pool cars are fueled with gasoline. An ethanol production plant is being built in Moses Lake and production is planned to begin in 2004.

Summary of Bill:

For the period July 1, 2004, through June 30, 2009, at least 50 percent of all new vehicles purchased by the GA for the motor pool must be electric hybrid vehicles, vehicles that use alternative fuels, or a combination of both.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 23, 2004.

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