

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6489

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Environment, Water & Energy, February 5, 2010

Title: An act relating to the energy efficiency code.

Brief Description: Adding products to the energy efficiency code.

Sponsors: Senators Oemig, Hobbs, Rockefeller, Fairley, Fraser, Brown, Shin and Kline.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Environment, Water & Energy: 1/29/10, 2/05/10 [DPS, DNP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT, WATER & ENERGY

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6489 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Rockefeller, Chair; Pridemore, Vice Chair; Fraser, Marr, Oemig and Ranker.

Minority Report: Do not pass.

Signed by Senators Honeyford, Ranking Minority Member; Morton.

Staff: Sam Thompson (786-7413)

Background: States may establish minimum energy efficiency standards for electrical products if state standards are not preempted by federal law. Washington has enacted minimum efficiency standards for several electrical products. Legislation enacted in 2009 set standards for a variety of products, including certain wine chillers and water heaters, by copying California energy efficiency standards for some products and adopting certain California regulations by reference.

In November 2009 the California Energy Commission promulgated energy efficiency standards for televisions with screens of 1,400 square inches or smaller (approximately 58 inches in a diagonal measurement). The standards, which have not yet been formally adopted under California procedural requirements, would apply to televisions sold in California beginning in 2011. A first standard (Tier 1), which would take effect in 2011, is intended to reduce television energy consumption by an average of 33 percent. A second

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standard (Tier 2), which would take effect in 2013, is intended to reduce television energy consumption (in conjunction with Tier 1 standards) by an average of 49 percent.

It is suggested that Washington should adopt the recently-promulgated California television energy efficiency standards.

Summary of Bill (Recommended Substitute): The Department of Commerce (Commerce) must monitor television energy efficiency standards (standards) proposed in California and Oregon. Commerce must provide the Legislature with recommendations regarding standards after California or Oregon adopt standards and Commerce determines that uniform West Coast standards would promote consistency and influence the market to achieve greater energy efficiency.

EFFECT OF CHANGES MADE BY ENVIRONMENT, WATER & ENERGY COMMITTEE (Recommended Substitute): Provisions adopting California television standards and clarifying a requirement enacted in 2009 concerning other products are deleted. Instead, the Commerce must monitor standards proposed in California and Oregon. Commerce must provide the Legislature with recommendations regarding standards after California or Oregon adopt standards and Commerce determines that uniform West Coast standards would promote consistency and influence the market to achieve greater energy efficiency.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Original Bill: PRO: While many TVs already exceed Tier 2 standards promulgated in California, and some manufacturers endorse the standards, all new TVs should meet the new California energy efficiency standards. Consumers are often unaware that newer large TVs use considerably more energy than older models, thus increasing energy demand. These standards will lessen load growth and more efficient TVs will lower consumer electric bills. Similar legislation is being considered in Massachusetts and New York.

CON: California standards have not been adopted; a state office that will review them for compliance with procedural and other requirements could potentially halt their adoption. The standards would negatively impact Washington retailers and other businesses. Market forces are already compelling manufacturers to produce energy efficient TVs; a regulatory mandate is not necessary. Voluntary Energy Star standards are sufficient. These standards create burdensome technical compliance problems for manufacturers.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Kim Drury, Northwest Energy Coalition; Linda Dethman, Dethman Associates; Blair Anundson, Washington Public Interest Research Group; David Cohan, Northwest Energy Efficiency Alliance.

CON: Charlie Brown, Doug Johnson, Consumer Electronics Association; Jon Fairhurst, Sharp Laboratories of America.