

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5869

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Energy, Telecommunications & Utilities, February 27, 1995

Title: An act relating to hearings conducted by the utilities and transportation commission.

Brief Description: Exempting the UTC from administrative law judge requirements.

Sponsors: Senators Smith, Long and Sheldon; by request of Utilities & Transportation Commission.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Energy, Telecommunications & Utilities: 2/23/95, 2/27/95 [DPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY, TELECOMMUNICATIONS & UTILITIES

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5869 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

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

Staff: Diane Smith (786-7410)

Background: Disputes before the Utilities and Transportation Commission are now conducted by an administrative law judge assigned to the commission by the chief administrative law judge of the Office of Administrative Hearings.

Summary of Substitute Bill: The Utilities and Transportation Commission is exempt from the statutory requirement that it must conduct its administrative hearings by an administrative law judge assigned by the Office of Administrative Hearings.

The commission may designate its employees to act as hearing examiners, administrative law judges, and review judges to preside over adjudicative proceedings and to enter initial orders under the Administrative Procedure Act.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The original bill allowed the WUTC to delegate its final decision-making authority to the hearing examiner, administrative law judge or review judge.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 14, 1995.

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

Testimony For: This bill allows the WUTC to maximize its staffing resources by holding administrative hearings in-house.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Dick Hemstad, Tim Sweeney, WUTC.