

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6394

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Energy, Telecommunications & Utilities, January 23, 1996

Title: An act relating to regulating cooling services as thermal heating services.

Brief Description: Regulating cooling services as thermal heating services.

Sponsors: Senators Loveland, West, Goings, Sutherland, Finkbeiner, Rasmussen, Hochstatter, Moyer and Morton.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Energy, Telecommunications & Utilities: 1/23/96 [DP].

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: Although used for decades, the rise in energy prices in the early 1980s prompted increased interest in the use of district heating systems. The 1983 Legislature responded by enacting legislation requested by the State Energy Office to clarify that district heating systems would be subject to only minimal regulation by the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission.

Within the last several years, requirements pertaining to the elimination of chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) have caused a renewed interest in district cooling systems. Using district heating and cooling services is now referred to as "thermal energy services."

Summary of Bill: References in statute that provide minimum regulation of district heating systems are changed to strike references to heating services and insert references to thermal energy services.

Within 180 days of June 1, 1996, the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission must adopt rules governing the provision of thermal energy service.

The section setting an expiration date on minimum regulation of district heating is repealed.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: This industry is competitive and does not need to be regulated.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: Steve King, WUTC; Collins Sprague, Ken Boni, WA Water Power Co.; Kathleen Collins, Sheet Metal and Air Conditioning Contractors; George Caan, WSEO.