AMENDED IN SENATE JUNE 24, 2002

AMENDED IN SENATE JUNE 18, 2002

AMENDED IN SENATE JUNE 3, 2002

AMENDED IN SENATE MAY 15, 2002

AMENDED IN SENATE APRIL 24, 2002

AMENDED IN SENATE SEPTEMBER 14, 2001

AMENDED IN SENATE JULY 18, 2001

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AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 26, 2001

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 16, 2001

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2001–02 REGULAR SESSION

ASSEMBLY BILL No. 57

Introduced by Assembly Member Wright
(Coauthor: Senator Alarcon)

December 4, 2000

An act to add Section 454.5 to the Public Utilities Code, relating to public utilities, making an appropriation therefor, and declaring the urgency thereof, to take effect immediately.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 57, as amended, Wright. Electrical corporations: procurement plans.

(1) The Public Utilities Act imposes various duties and responsibilities on the Public Utilities Commission with respect to the purchase of electricity.

This bill would state findings and declarations regarding providing guidance to electrical corporations and the commission for the procurement of electricity and electricity demand reductions by an electrical corporation and providing for review by the commission of procurement plans of electrical corporations.

The bill would amend the act to require the commission to review and adopt a procurement plan for each electrical corporation in accordance with elements, incentive mechanisms, and objectives set forth in the bill.

The bill would authorize the commission to engage an independent consultant or advisory service to evaluate risk management and strategy. The bill would require the commission to adopt appropriate procedures to ensure the confidentiality of any market sensitive information submitted in an electrical corporation's proposed procurement plan or resulting from or related to its approved procurement plan, and to determine the impact of a proposed divestiture on an electrical corporation's procurement plan.

The bill would allow an electrical corporation that serves less than 500,000 retail customers within the state to file with the commission a request for exemption from the provisions of the bill. The bill would require the commission to grant the exemption upon a showing of good cause.

(2) Existing law makes a violation of the provisions of the act a crime.

This bill, by imposing new requirements on electrical corporations, would expand the scope of that crime, and thus impose a state-mandated local program.

(3) The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

This bill would provide that no reimbursement is required by this act for a specified reason.

(4) The bill would appropriate $600,000 from the Public Utilities Commission Utility Reimbursement Account to the commission for the purposes of implementing this bill.

(5) The bill would declare that it is to take effect immediately as an urgency statute.

Vote: $^{2}/_{3}$. Appropriation: yes. Fiscal committee: yes. State-mandated local program: yes.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. It is the intent of the Legislature to do all of the following:

(a) Provide guidance to electrical corporations and the Public Utilities Commission for the prospective procurement of electricity and electricity demand reductions by an electrical corporation.

(b) Ensure, by no later than January 1, 2003, that each electrical corporation whose customers are currently being served by the Department of Water Resources will resume procurement for those needs that are not being met by the Department of Water Resources.

(c) Direct the Public Utilities Commission, consistent with subdivisions (a) and (b) of Section 701.1 of the Public Utilities Code, to review each electrical corporation's procurement plan in a manner that assures creation of a diversified procurement portfolio, assures just and reasonable electricity rates, provides certainty to the electrical corporation in order to enhance its financial stability and creditworthiness, and eliminates the need, with certain exceptions, for after-the-fact reasonableness reviews of an electrical corporation's prospective electricity procurement performed consistent with an approved procurement plan.

(d) Direct the Public Utilities Commission to assure that each electrical corporation optimizes the value of its overall supply portfolio, including Department of Water Resources contracts and procurement pursuant to Section 454.5 of the Public Utilities Code, for the benefit of its bundled service customers.

SEC. 2. Section 454.5 is added to the Public Utilities Code, to read:

454.5. (a) The commission shall specify the allocation of electricity, including quantity, characteristics, and duration of electricity delivery, that the Department of Water Resources shall provide under its power purchase agreements to the customers of each electrical corporation, which shall be reflected in the electrical corporation's proposed procurement plan. Each electrical corporation shall file a proposed procurement plan with the commission not later than 60 days after the commission specifies the allocation of electricity. The proposed procurement plan shall specify the date that the electrical corporation intends to resume procurement of electricity for its retail customers, consistent with its obligation to serve. After the commission's adoption of a procurement plan, the commission shall allow not less than 90 days before the electrical corporation resumes procurement pursuant to this section.

(b) An electrical corporation's proposed procurement plan shall include, but not be limited to, all of the following:

(1) An assessment of the price risk associated with the electrical corporation's portfolio, including any utility-retained generation, existing power purchase and exchange contracts, and proposed contracts or purchases under which an electrical corporation will procure electricity, electricity demand reductions, and electricity-related products and the remaining open position to be served by spot market transactions.

(2) A definition of each electricity product, electricity-related product, and procurement related financial product, including support and justification for the product type and amount to be procured under the plan.

(3) The duration of the plan.

(4) The duration, timing, and range of quantities of each product to be procured.

(5) A competitive procurement process under which the electrical corporation may request bids for procurement-related services, including the format and criteria of that procurement process.

(6) An incentive mechanism, if any incentive mechanism is proposed, including the type of transactions to be covered by that mechanism, their respective procurement benchmarks, and other parameters needed to determine the sharing of risks and benefits.

(7) The upfront standards and criteria by which the acceptability and eligibility for rate recovery of a proposed procurement transaction will be known by the electrical corporation prior to execution of the transaction. This shall include an expedited approval process for the commission's review of proposed contracts and subsequent approval or rejection thereof.

The electrical corporation shall propose alternative procurement choices in the event a contract is rejected.

(8) Procedures for updating the procurement plan.

(9) A showing that the procurement plan will achieve the following:

(A) The electrical corporation will, in order to fulfill its unmet resource needs and in furtherance of Section 701.3, until a 20 percent renewable resources portfolio is achieved, procure renewable energy resources with the goal of ensuring that at least ~~1 percent per year the electricity procured~~ *an additional 1 percent per year of the electricity sold* by the electrical corporation is generated from renewable energy resources, provided sufficient funds are made available pursuant to Section 399.6, to cover the above-market costs for new renewable energy resources.

(B) The electrical corporation will create or maintain a diversified procurement portfolio consisting of both short-term and long-term electricity and electricity-related and demand reductions products.

(10) The electrical corporation's risk management policy, strategy, and practices, including specific measures of price stability.

(11) A plan to achieve appropriate increases in diversity of ownership and diversity of fuel supply of nonutility electrical generation.

(12) A mechanism for recovery of reasonable administrative costs related to procurement in the generation component of rates.

(c) The commission shall review and accept, modify, or reject each electrical corporation's procurement plan. The commission's review shall consider each electrical corporation's individual procurement situation, and shall give strong consideration to that situation in determining which one or more of the features set forth in this subdivision shall apply to that electrical corporation. A procurement plan approved by the commission shall contain one or more of the following features, provided that the commission may not approve a feature or mechanism for an electrical corporation if it finds that the feature or mechanism would impair the restoration of an electrical corporation's creditworthiness or would lead to a deterioration of an electrical corporation's creditworthiness:

(1) A competitive procurement process under which the electrical corporation may request bids for procurement-related services. The commission shall specify the format of that procurement process, as well as criteria to ensure that the auction process is open and adequately subscribed. Any purchases made in compliance with the commission-authorized process shall be recovered in the generation component of rates.

(2) An incentive mechanism that establishes a procurement benchmark or benchmarks and authorizes the electrical corporation to procure from the market, subject to comparing the electrical corporation's performance to the commission-authorized benchmark or benchmarks. The incentive mechanism shall be clear, achievable, and contain quantifiable objectives and standards. The incentive mechanism shall contain balanced risk and reward incentives that limit the risk and reward of an electrical corporation.

(3) Upfront achievable standards and criteria by which the acceptability and eligibility for rate recovery of a proposed procurement transaction will be known by the electrical corporation prior to the execution of the bilateral contract for the transaction. The commission shall provide for expedited review and either approve or reject the individual contracts submitted by the electrical corporation to ensure compliance with its procurement plan. To the extent the commission rejects a proposed contract pursuant to this criteria, the commission shall designate alternative procurement choices obtained in the procurement plan that will be recoverable for ratemaking purposes.

(d) A procurement plan approved by the commission shall accomplish each of the following objectives:

(1) Enable the electrical corporation to fulfill its obligation to serve its customers at just and reasonable rates.

(2) Eliminate the need for after-the-fact reasonableness reviews of an electrical corporation's actions in compliance with an approved procurement plan, including resulting electricity procurement contracts, practices, and related expenses. However, the commission may establish a regulatory process to verify and assure that each contract was administered in accordance with the terms of the contract, and contract disputes which may arise are reasonably resolved.

(3) Ensure timely recovery of prospective procurement costs incurred pursuant to an approved procurement plan. The commission shall establish rates based on forecasts of procurement costs adopted by the commission, actual procurement costs incurred, or combination thereof, as determined by the commission. The commission shall establish power procurement balancing accounts to track the differences between recorded revenues and costs incurred pursuant to an approved procurement plan. The commission shall review the power procurement balancing accounts, not less than semiannually, and shall adjust rates or order refunds, as necessary, to promptly amortize a balancing account, according to a schedule determined by the commission. Until January 1, 2006, the commission shall ensure that any overcollection or undercollection in the power procurement balancing account does not exceed 5 percent of the electrical corporation's actual recorded generation revenues for the prior calendar year excluding revenues collected for the Department of Water Resources. The commission shall determine the schedule for amortizing the overcollection or undercollection in the balancing account to ensure that the 5 percent threshold is not exceeded. After January 1, 2006, this adjustment shall occur when deemed appropriate by the commission consistent with the objectives of this section.

(4) Moderate the price risk associated with serving its retail customers, including the price risk embedded in its long-term supply contracts, by authorizing an electrical corporation to enter into financial and other electricity-related product contracts.

(5) Provide for just and reasonable rates, with an appropriate balancing of price stability and price level in the electrical corporation's procurement plan.

(e) The commission shall provide for the periodic review and prospective modification of an electrical corporation's procurement plan.

(f) The commission may engage an independent consultant or advisory service to evaluate risk management and strategy. The reasonable costs of any consultant or advisory service is a reimbursable expense and eligible for funding pursuant to Section 631.

(g) The commission shall adopt appropriate procedures to ensure the confidentiality of any market sensitive information submitted in an electrical corporation's proposed procurement plan or resulting from or related to its approved procurement plan, including, but not limited to, proposed or executed power purchase agreements, data request responses, or consultant reports, or any combination, provided that the Office of Ratepayer Advocates and other consumer groups that are nonmarket participants shall be provided access to this information under confidentiality procedures authorized by the commission.

(h) Nothing in this section alters, modifies, or amends the commission's oversight of affiliate transactions under its rules and decisions or the commission's existing authority to investigate and penalize an electrical corporation's alleged fraudulent activities, or to disallow costs incurred as a result of gross incompetence, fraud, abuse, or similar grounds. Nothing in this section expands, modifies, or limits the State Energy Resources Conservation and Development Commission's existing authority and responsibilities as set forth in Sections 25216, 25216.5, and 25323 of the Public Resources Code.

(i) An electrical corporation that serves less than 500,000 electric retail customers within the state may file with the commission a request for exemption from this section, which the commission shall grant upon a showing of good cause.

(j) (1) Prior to its approval pursuant to Section 851 of any divestiture of generation assets owned by an electrical corporation on or after the date of enactment of the act adding this section, the commission shall determine the impact of the proposed divestiture on the electrical corporation's procurement rates and shall approve a divestiture only to the extent it finds, taking into account the effect of the divestiture on procurement rates, that the divestiture is in the public interest and will result in net ratepayer benefits.

(2) Any electrical corporation's procurement necessitated as a result of the divestiture of generation assets on or after the effective date of the act adding this subdivision shall be subject to the mechanisms and procedures set forth in this section only if its actual cost is less than the recent historical cost of the divested generation assets.

(3) Notwithstanding paragraph (2), the commission may deem proposed procurement eligible to use the procedures in this section upon its approval of asset divestiture pursuant to Section 851.

SEC. 3. Nothing in this act is intended to imply that procurement of electricity from third parties in a wholesale transaction is the preferred method of fulfilling an electrical corporation's obligation to serve its customers at just and reasonable rates.

SEC. 4. No reimbursement is required by this act pursuant to Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution because the only costs that may be incurred by a local agency or school district will be incurred because this act creates a new crime or infraction, eliminates a crime or infraction, or changes the penalty for a crime or infraction, within the meaning of Section 17556 of the Government Code, or changes the definition of a crime within the meaning of Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution.

SEC. 5. The sum of six hundred thousand dollars ($600,000) is hereby appropriated from the Public Utilities Commission Utility Reimbursement Account in the General Fund to the Public Utilities Commission for the purposes of implementing this act.

SEC. 6. This act is an urgency statute necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety within the meaning of Article IV of the Constitution and shall go into immediate effect. The facts constituting the necessity are:

In order that the Public Utilities Commission may undertake the review and approval of each electric corporation's procurement plan at the earliest possible time, in a manner consistent with this act, it is necessary that this act take effect immediately.

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