

HB 340 -- NET METERING

SPONSOR: Fitzwater (49)

This bill amends the Net Metering and Easy Connection Act to provide that a customer-generator's net metering may not exceed 100% of the customer's electrical energy requirements.

The bill transfers certification authority of an energy resource as "renewable" from the Department of Natural Resources to the Department of Economic Development.

Currently, any municipal utility or rural electric cooperative is subject to the net metering requirements of the act as retail electric suppliers. This bill limits the definition of "retail electric supplier" to only include a municipal utility or rural electric cooperative if they serve 20,000 or more meters. The bill also amends the scope of "retail electric supplier" by deeming all electrical corporations regulated by the Public Service Commission to be rural electric cooperatives for the purposes of the act.

The bill also provides an alternative net metering rate structure required by the act. Currently, retail electric suppliers shall not charge customer-generators for standby, capacity, interconnection, or other fees that a customer would not otherwise be charged if the customer did not participate in net metering. This bill offers retail electric suppliers the option of recovering the portion of costs associated with providing net metering with a rate structure reasonably calculated to prevent unfair subsidization.

The bill additionally requires that all cost savings or system payback calculations given by sellers of qualified electric energy generation units to be based on then-existing electric service rates of the applicable retail electric supplier. If rate increases are included in the calculations then such projections must be based on then-existing rates and the actual percentage increase in rates averaged over the previous 10 years of the applicable retail electric supplier. Any person who intentionally and knowingly violates this requirement shall be guilty of a class B misdemeanor.