

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND PUBLIC UTILITIES

SB 928 - ROGERS

Hearing date: 5-5-87

Public Resources Code

Appropriations: Yes

52

SENATE BILL 928:

would modify the definition of "thermal powerplant" to clarify that wind, hydroelectric and solar photovoltaic electrical generating facilities are not thermal powerplants.

BACKGROUND

Under the Warren-Alquist Act, the California Energy Commission (CEC) is responsible for siting thermal powerplants of a size equal to or greater than 50 megawatts (MW). Electrical generating facilities which are not thermally powered are exempt from the CEC's siting authority.

Thermal electric power generally refers to electric energy produced by a turbine and generator using thermal fuel. Thermal generation fuels include gas, oil, nuclear, coal, geothermal steam, and industrial or residential waste products.

Currently, the CEC does not consider wind, hydroelectric or solar photovoltaic electric generating facilities to fall within the definition of "thermal powerplant."

Last year during interim, the Committee considered SB 2290 (Alquist) which would have expanded CEC jurisdiction to include the siting of thermal powerplants of a size equal to or greater than 20 MW.

SB 494 (Rosenthal), introduced this year, would modify the definition of thermal powerplant to include "mobile" generating facilities.

DESCRIPTION

SB. 928 would add the following provision to the definition of "thermal powerplant":

"Thermal powerplant" does not include any wind, hydroelectric, or solar photovol(aire) (sic) electrical generating facility."

Mr. Thacker

COMMENTS

- 1. SB 928 was introduced by the author to clarify existing law and to give assurances to businesses engaged in renewable energy development, such as wind, hydro and solar energy developers, that they will not be subject to regulatory burdens associated with CEC siting jurisdiction.

Honorable Don Rogers
Member of the Senate
State Capitol, Room 2068
Sacramento, CA 95814

DEPARTMENT: Finance
AUTHOR: Rogers
BILL NUMBER: ~~SB 928~~ ^{RF}
SPONSORED BY: _____
RELATED BILLS: _____
AMENDMENT DATE: _____
~~Original~~

BILL SUMMARY

This bill would revise the definition of thermal power plant in existing law to clarify that wind, hydroelectric, and solar photovoltaic electrical generating facilities are not thermal power plants.

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS

This bill would clarify existing law by exempting electrical generating facilities which are not thermally powered from the CEC's siting authority. CEC staff indicate that this bill would have no fiscal or programmatic impact on the Commission's existing programs.

FISCAL SUMMARY--STATE LEVEL

Code/Department Agency or Revenue Type	SO	(Fiscal Impact by Fiscal Year)						Code Fund		
		(Dollars in Thousands)								
	LA	CO	RV	FC	1986-87	FC	1987-88	FC	1988-89	
3360/CEC	SO									NO FISCAL IMPACT

Impact on State Appropriations Limit--No.

ANALYSIS

A. Specific Findings

Under existing law, the CEC is responsible for siting thermal power plants that are 50 megawatts or greater. Thermal generation fuels include gas, oil, nuclear, coal, geothermal steam, and industrial or residential waste products. Currently, electrical generating facilities which are not thermally powered are exempt from the CEC's siting authority.

This bill would revise the definition of thermal power plant to specifically exclude any wind, hydroelectric, or solar photovoltaic electrical generating facility. Since the CEC does not include these types of facilities within the definition of thermal power plant for siting purposes, the author's intent is to clarify existing law and assure renewable energy developers (wind, hydro, and solar) that they will not be subject to the CEC siting jurisdiction.

B. Fiscal Analysis

CEC staff indicate that this bill would have no fiscal or programmatic impact on the Commission's existing programs.

POSITION: _____ Department Director _____ Date _____

Neutral

Principal Analyst (552) _____ Date 5/8 _____ Program Budget Manager _____ Date 5/8 _____ Governor's Office _____

Position noted _____
Position approved _____
Position disapproved _____
by: _____ date: _____

HW:0075g/2

BILL ANALYSIS/ENROLLED BILL REPORT

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