california legislature—2011–12 regular session

ASSEMBLY BILL No. 1261

Introduced by Assembly Member Fletcher

February 18, 2011

An act to amend Section 2830 of the Public Utilities Code, relating to energy.

legislative counsel's digest

AB 1261, as introduced, Fletcher. Local government renewable energy self-generation program.

Under existing law, the Public Utilities Commission has regulatory authority over public utilities, including electrical corporations, as defined. Existing law authorizes the commission to fix the rates and charges for every public utility, and requires that those rates and charges be just and reasonable. The local government renewable energy self-generation program authorizes a local government, as defined, to receive a bill credit, as defined, to be applied to a designated benefiting account for electricity exported to the electrical grid by an eligible renewable generating facility, as defined, and requires the commission to adopt a rate tariff for the benefiting account.

This bill would make a nonsubstantive, technical revision to the local government renewable energy self-generation program.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: no. State-mandated local program: no.

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

SECTION 1. Section 2830 of the Public Utilities Code is amended to read:

2830. (a) As used in this section, the following terms have the following meanings:

(1) "Benefiting account" means an electricity account, or more than one account, located within the geographical boundaries of a local government or, for a campus, within the geographical boundary of the city, county, or city and county in which the campus is located, that is mutually agreed upon by the local government or campus and an electrical corporation.

(2) "Bill credit" means an amount of money credited to a benefiting account that is calculated based upon the time-of-use electricity generation component of the electricity usage charge of the generating account, multiplied by the quantities of electricity generated by an eligible renewable generating facility that are exported to the grid during the corresponding time period. Electricity is exported to the grid if it is generated by an eligible renewable generating facility, is not utilized onsite by the local government, and the electricity flows through the meter site and on to the electrical corporation's distribution or transmission infrastructure.

(3) "Campus" means an individual community college campus, individual California State University campus, or individual University of California campus.

(4) "Eligible renewable generating facility" means a generation facility that meets all of the following requirements:

(A) Has a generating capacity of no more than one megawatt.

(B) Is an eligible renewable energy resource, as defined in Article 16 (commencing with Section 399.11) of Part 1.

(C) Is located within the geographical boundary of the local government or, for a campus, within the geographical boundary of the city or city and county, if the campus is located in an incorporated area, or county, if the campus is located in an unincorporated area.

(D) Is owned by, operated by, or on property under the control of, the local government or campus.

(E) Is sized to offset all or part of the electrical load of the benefiting account. For these purposes, premises that are leased by a local government or campus are under the control of the local government or campus.

(5) “Generating account” means the time-of-use electric service account of the local government or campus where the eligible renewable generating facility is located.

(6) “Local government” means a city, county, whether general law or chartered, city and county, special district, school district, political subdivision, or other local public agency, but shall not mean a joint powers authority, the state or any agency or department of the state, other than an individual campus of the University of California or the California State University.

(b) Subject to the limitation in subdivision (h), a local government may elect to receive electric service pursuant to this section, if all of the following conditions are met:

(1) The local government designates one or more benefiting accounts to receive a bill credit.

(2) A benefiting account receives service under a time-of-use rate schedule.

(3) The benefiting account is the responsibility of, and serves property that is owned, operated, or on property under the control of the same local government that owns, operates, or controls the eligible renewable generating facility.

(4) The electrical output of the eligible renewable generating facility is metered for time of use to allow calculation of the bill credit based upon when the electricity is exported to the grid.

(5) All costs associated with the metering requirements of paragraphs (2) and (4) are the responsibility of the local government.

(6) All costs associated with interconnection are the responsibility of the local government. For purposes of this paragraph, “interconnection” has the same meaning as defined in Section 2803, except that it applies to the interconnection of an eligible renewable generating facility rather than the energy source of a private energy producer.

(7) The local government does not sell electricity exported to the electrical grid to a third party.

(8) All electricity exported to the grid by the local government that is generated by the eligible renewable generating facility becomes the property of the electrical corporation to which the facility is interconnected, but shall not be counted toward the electrical corporation’s total retail sales for purposes of Article 16 (commencing with Section 399.11) of Chapter 2.3 of Part 1.

Ownership of the renewable energy credits, as defined in Section 399.12, shall be the same as the ownership of the renewable energy credits associated with electricity that is net metered pursuant to Section 2827.

(c) (1) A benefiting account shall be billed for all electricity usage, and for each bill component, at the rate schedule applicable to the benefiting account, including any cost-responsibility surcharge or other cost recovery mechanism, as determined by the commission, to reimburse the Department of Water Resources for purchases of electricity, pursuant to Division 27 (commencing with Section 80000) of the Water Code.

(2) The bill shall then subtract the bill credit applicable to the benefiting account. The generation component credited to the benefiting account may not include the cost-responsibility surcharge or other cost recovery mechanism, as determined by the commission, to reimburse the Department of Water Resources for purchases of electricity, pursuant to Division 27 (commencing with Section 80000) of the Water Code. The electrical corporation shall ensure that the local government receives the full bill credit.

(3) If, during the billing cycle, the generation component of the electricity usage charges exceeds the bill credit, the benefiting account shall be billed for the difference.

(4) If, during the billing cycle, the bill credit applied pursuant to paragraph (2) exceeds the generation component of the electricity usage charges, the difference shall be carried forward as a financial credit to the next billing cycle.

(5) After the electricity usage charge, pursuant to paragraph (1), and the credit, pursuant to paragraph (2), are determined for the last billing cycle of a 12-month period, any remaining credit resulting from the application of this section shall be reset to zero.

(d) The commission shall ensure that the transfer of a bill credit to a benefiting account does not result in a shifting of costs to bundled service subscribers. The costs associated with the transfer of a bill credit shall include all billing-related expenses.

(e) Not more frequently than once per year, and upon providing the electrical corporation with a minimum of 60 days' notice, the local government may elect to change a benefiting account. Any credit resulting from the application of this section earned prior to the change in a benefiting account that has not been used as of the date of the change in the benefiting account, shall be applied, and may only be applied, to a benefiting account as changed.

(f) A local government shall provide the electrical corporation to which the eligible renewable generating facility will be interconnected with not less than 60 days' notice prior to the eligible renewable generating facility becoming operational. The electrical corporation shall file an advice letter with the commission, that complies with this section, not later than 30 days after receipt of the notice, proposing a rate tariff for a benefiting account. The commission, within 30 days of the date of filing, shall approve the proposed tariff, or specify conforming changes to be made by the electrical corporation to be filed in a new advice letter.

(g) The local government may terminate its election pursuant to subdivision (b), upon providing the electrical corporation with a minimum of 60 days' notice. Should the local government sell its interest in the eligible renewable generating facility, or sell the electricity generated by the eligible renewable generating facility, in a manner other than required by this section, upon the date of either event, and the earliest date if both events occur, no further bill credit pursuant to paragraph (3) of subdivision (b) may be earned. Only credit earned prior to that date shall be made to a benefiting account.

(h) An electrical corporation is not obligated to provide a bill credit to a benefiting account that is not designated by a local government prior to the point in time that the combined statewide cumulative rated generating capacity of all eligible renewable generating facilities within the service territories of the state's three largest electrical corporations reaches 250 megawatts. Only those eligible renewable generating facilities that are providing bill credits to benefiting accounts pursuant to this section shall count toward reaching this 250-megawatt limitation. Each electrical corporation shall only be required to offer service or contracts under this section until that electrical corporation reaches its proportionate share of the 250-megawatt limitation based on the ratio of its peak demand to the total statewide peak demand of all electrical corporations.

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