



Ambassador Update

The first major cut-off for bills has arrived in the Legislature. In the House, policy bills had to pass out of their committee of origin to remain “alive” by February 20. In the Senate policy bills had a few more days to be worked on—February 25th. House and Senate fiscal bills have until March 2 to pass out of the committee of origin. The bills that survive must pass out of the house of origin by March 12 to the other chamber, whether it is from the Senate to the House, or vice-versa.



These deadlines always create an extra busy time in the state Capitol. Many committees and hearings have gone into the “wee hours” as legislators hammer out the details in proposed legislation.

The next major cut-off will occur in the opposite House. Bills will run through the same process in each chamber as they pass to each other. For any piece of legislation to become law, it must go through the process of both chambers, then a final review by the originating chamber before being forwarded to the Governor for approval.

Read more inside on the progress of bills that the Washington Rural Electric Cooperative Association (WRECA) is following in Olympia.

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**AMBASSADOR
UPDATE**



Live From Olympia

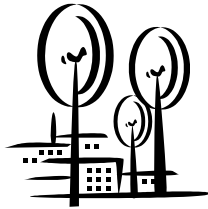
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What's happening at the state capitol?

Compromise: Name of the Game

There are several bills introduced this year to amend the Renewable Portfolio Standard, which was made into law by a voter-initiative in 2006. **House Bill 1133**—WRECA opposed because it sought to increase the percentages of mandated renewable energy—"died" in committee before the first cut-off. **Senate Bill 5840** introduces similar increases to the mandated percentages, but also implements technical changes to the law which will should make it easier for utilities to acquire the defined renewable resources and less expensive to comply with the mandates. WRECA is supporting this bill despite the increases proposed as the overall impact is expected to be positive for cooperatives.



Feed-In Tariffs

A provision was added to **HB 1086** that would allow the utility's governing board to set policies that would limit the location of the distributed generation if there were safety concerns. The mandated power rates table has been replaced by a provision that would give the state's Community Trade and Economic Development department the authority to propose rates to be approved by the Legislature in the next session. WRECA is opposed to this bill.

New Faces In Olympia

Shelly Short (R-7th District) was elected to replace Representative Bob Sump who retired in 2008. Representative Short is not truly a new face in Olympia as she worked with Representative Joel Kretz as his Legislative Aide in preceding sessions. Rep. Short and her husband, Mitch, have two children.

Rep. Short serves on the following House committees: Ecology and Parks (Ranking member), General Government Appropriations, Local Government and Housing, and Audit Review and Oversight.

Nespelem Valley Electric Cooperative serves a portion of the 7th District.

Jan Angel (R-26th District) was elected to the position held previously by Representative Pat Lantz who retired in 2008. Representative Angel's district includes Peninsula Light Company in Gig Harbor.

Rep. Angel was selected as Assistant Minority Whip in her freshmen term. She serves on the following House committees: Local Government and Housing (Ranking member), Higher Education, and Early Learning and Children's Services.

Rep. Angel served as a Kitsap County commissioner from 2000 until 2008. She has lived in South Kitsap for the past 25 years and is married to Lynn Williams.

Good News for the Northwest

The Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) announced plans for a major expansion to its transmission system. The McNary-John Day transmission line will be added to provide service to meet the growing energy demand of the region and support renewable resource development needs.

The \$246 million project will create about 700 jobs at its peak, and is expected to be energized by late 2012. The line will transmit more than 870 megawatts (mW) of energy, including over 700 mW of new wind power.

This line will begin from the McNary substation in Oregon, run across the Columbia River into Washington, paralleling the River for about 75 miles, and then cross back into Oregon to end at the John-Day substation.

This project got the go-ahead when the BPA received an additional \$3.25 billion in borrowing authority from the U.S. Treasury as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act signed into law by President Barack Obama.

The decision to move forward on the project was made easier by the increase in access to capital funds.

