



Ambassador Update

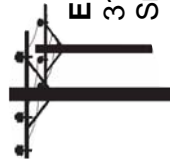


Welcome to the first edition of *Live From Olympia* for 2008! This newsletter provides you as Electric Ambassadors with updates on state legislation, regulations or policies that impact electric cooperatives (co-op) in Washington. The Electric Ambassador program partners with the Washington Rural Electric Cooperative Association (WRECA), the statewide trade association in Olympia which advocates for electric co-ops and their members.

There are several significant energy issues already being discussed as the Washington State Legislature begins the 2008 session. Look inside to learn more about the issues we expect to see making their way through the Legislative process and becoming laws. We will keep you updated about the process along the way. For more timely updates, please join our Action Alert team by sending your email to info@electricambassadors.org.

This year is the 10th Anniversary of *Live From Olympia*. Thank you to all our great grassroots members who have been there since the beginning of the Electric Ambassador program and to all of the new members who have since joined!

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**AMBASSADOR
UPDATE**



Live From Olympia

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What's happening at the state capitol?

This year is a short session as all of the State House of Representatives and half of the Senators are up for re-election this year. Legislators are working towards a March 13 adjournment and then they'll head back to their respective districts to begin campaigning.

Between now and then are two important "cut off" dates by which legislation needs to make it one step closer to becoming law. February 19 is the last day for bills to be heard in their house of origin. March 7 is the last day to consider bills that have passed into the opposite house.

Even at this early date in session, there is a lot of activity on the hill. 2008 has seen more pre-filed bills in the history of the State Legislature and this is especially significant as it is a short session and there is a finite amount of time to work on bills.

Climate Change & GHG

Governor Chris Gregoire's office has presented an agency request bill called the Climate Action bill (**House Bill 2815** and **Senate Bill 6516**). It is a blending of 2 previous bills that were being proposed for early filing and it would authorize the Department of Ecology (DOE) to design and implement a greenhouse gas (GHG) reporting program for all economic sectors in the state, and would authorize DOE to design a CO₂ emissions cap and trade

program for the legislature to consider during its 2009 session.

The fact that the Governor has formally requested this bill guarantees that it will get serious consideration by the legislature. WRECA wants to make sure that utilities—our electric cooperatives use over 70% clean and renewable hydropower - get recognition and credit for already being clean and green in any cap and trade program.

Pole Attachments!?!?




Yes, pole attachments. Your electric co-op can rent space to telephone and cable providers on the power poles installed and maintained by it. This is a way of at least covering the proportional costs of the pole's ownership to keep our members from subsidizing "for profit" entities such as the telephone companies and cable companies.

Rep. McCoy (D-38), Chair of the House Technology, Energy and Communications Committee has introduced **House Bill 2533** that would regulate the fees that locally-regulated utilities charge these businesses, as well as the schedule. Currently, this is a business-to-business (B2B) contract negotiated between the utility supplying the space and the communication company

leasing it. WRECA feels the B2B negotiations come up with an equitable deal for all involved. Rep. McCoy has made indications that he intends to exempt electric co-ops and municipalities from HB 2533. We'll continue to follow its progress as well as a companion bill in the Senate – **SB 6585**.

2008 Legislative Rally

Over 100 of WRECA's electric co-op managers and board members will gather in Olympia on  January 28 and 29 to sit down with the legislators that represent them to discuss these issues face to face. In-depth meetings will be held on the benefits and detriments of legislation that could impact your co-op. Always at the top of the list is protecting local control and keeping power rates affordable. *Live From Olympia* will report on the results of the WRECA Legislative Day in its February edition, so stay tuned!

E-mail Saves Money & Time!

Things move fast in Olympia, and we need your email address to contact state legislators quickly. Please send your email address, name and electric co-op to info@electricambassadors.com to help us be more effective in Olympia, and save money on printing and postage.