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FIRST REPRINT **S.B. 123**

SENATE BILL NO. 123–SENATOR ATKINSON

FEBRUARY 18, 2013

JOINT SPONSORS: ASSEMBLYMEN BOBZIEN AND KIRKPATRICK

Referred to Committee on Commerce, Labor and Energy

SUMMARY—Revises provisions relating to energy. (BDR 58-106)

FISCAL NOTE: Effect on Local Government: No.
Effect on the State: Yes.

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EXPLANATION – Matter in ***bolded italics*** is new; matter between brackets [~~omitted material~~] is material to be omitted.

AN ACT relating to energy; requiring certain electric utilities in this State to file with the Public Utilities Commission of Nevada an emissions reduction and capacity replacement plan; prescribing the minimum requirements of such a plan; providing for the recovery of certain costs relating to an emissions reduction and capacity replacement plan; prescribing the powers and duties of the Commission and the Division of Environmental Protection of the State Department of Conservation and Natural Resources with respect to such a plan; providing for the mitigation of certain amounts in excess of a utility's total revenue requirement; making an appropriation; and providing other matters properly relating thereto.

Legislative Counsel's Digest:

Section 7 of this bill requires an electric utility which primarily serves densely populated counties (currently only Clark County) and which, in the most recently completed calendar year or in any other calendar year within the 7 calendar years immediately preceding the most recently completed calendar year, had a gross operating revenue of $250,000,000 or more in this State to submit to the Public Utilities Commission of Nevada a comprehensive plan for the reduction of emissions from coal-fired electric generating plants and the replacement of the capacity of such plants with increased capacity from renewable energy facilities and natural gas-fired electric generating plants and the implementation of demand response programs. **Section 7** prescribes the minimum requirements of such an emissions reduction and capacity replacement plan, which include: (1) the

retirement or elimination of not less than 800 megawatts of coal-fired electric generating capacity on or before December 31, 2019; (2) the acquisition of or contracting for 600 megawatts of electric generating capacity from renewable energy facilities; (3) the acquisition or construction of between 700 megawatts and 800 megawatts of electric generating capacity from natural gas-fired electric generating plants on or before July 1, 2021; and (4) the deployment on or before December 31, 2017, of a demand response program designed to reduce peak demand by 100 megawatts.

Sections 8 and 9 of this bill provide for the recovery of certain costs incurred by an electric utility in carrying out an emissions reduction and capacity replacement plan. **Section 9** also requires an electric utility to file with the Commission a schedule to provide certain credits to customers of the utility. **Section 9** further provides that a schedule filed with the Commission by an electric utility to provide for the recovery of costs and a schedule to provide credits to customers are effective automatically on the first day of the next calendar quarter following the filing of such a schedule. **Sections 14 and 15** of this bill reflect the automatic effectiveness of such filings.

Sections 10, 18 and 19 of this bill provide that the Division of Environmental Protection of the State Department of Conservation and Natural Resources has exclusive jurisdiction to supervise and regulate the remediation of any site previously used for the production of electricity from a coal-fired electric generating plant, including authority to regulate and supervise the remediation of surface water and groundwater and solid-waste disposal operations located at such a site. Additionally, **sections 10 and 20** of this bill provide that the Division has exclusive authority to regulate emissions from any renewable energy facility or natural gas-fired electric generating plant constructed on a site previously used for the production of electricity from a coal-fired electric generating plant.

Section 12 of this bill establishes provisions concerning the filing of an amendment to a utility's emissions reduction and capacity replacement plan for purposes of the Commission's approval and acceptance of certain contracts between the utility and a renewable energy facility.

Existing law establishes provisions governing public hearings on the adequacy of a utility's plan to increase its supply of electricity or decrease demands made on its system. (NRS 704.746) **Section 16** of this bill authorizes the Commission to give preference to the measures and sources of supply that provide the greatest opportunity for the creation of new jobs in this State. **Section 16** also requires the Commission to accept any element of an emissions reduction and capacity replacement plan that meets certain criteria.

Existing law requires the Commission to issue an order to accept as filed a utility's plan to increase its supply of electricity or to decrease demands on its system or to specify any portions of such a plan as inadequate. (NRS 704.751) **Section 17** of this bill revises the time in which a utility may file an amendment to its plan and also requires a utility to take all reasonable steps necessary to acquire renewable energy facilities and implement programs and elements identified in the utility's emissions reduction and capacity replacement plan if the plan has been accepted by the Commission.

Section 21 of this bill appropriates from the State General Fund to the Legislative Fund the sum of $150,000 for the purpose of contracting with a consultant to conduct a study of the impact of energy-related tax incentives on renewable energy development in this State.

Section 22 of this bill provides that this bill becomes effective upon passage and approval.

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEVADA, REPRESENTED IN SENATE AND ASSEMBLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Chapter 704 of NRS is hereby amended by adding thereto the provisions set forth as sections 2 to 13, inclusive, of this act.

Sec. 2. ***As used in sections 2 to 13, inclusive, of this act, unless the context otherwise requires, the words and terms defined in sections 3 to 6, inclusive, of this act have the meanings ascribed to them in those sections.***

Sec. 3. ***"Demand response program" means a program for the management of consumption of electricity in response to peak demand conditions.***

Sec. 4. ***"Electric utility" means an electric utility that primarily serves densely populated counties, as that term is defined in paragraph (c) of subsection 17 of NRS 704.110.***

Sec. 5. ***"Emissions reduction and capacity replacement plan" means a plan filed by an electric utility with the Commission pursuant to section 7 of this act.***

Sec. 6. ***"Renewable energy facility" means an electric generating facility that uses renewable energy to produce electricity. As used in this section, "renewable energy" has the meaning ascribed to it in NRS 704.7811.***

Sec. 7. ***1. An electric utility shall file with the Commission, as part of the plan required to be submitted pursuant to NRS 704.741, a comprehensive plan for the reduction of emissions from coal-fired electric generating plants and the replacement of the capacity of such plants with increased capacity from renewable energy facilities and natural gas-fired electric generating plants and the implementation of a demand response program.***

2. The emissions reduction and capacity replacement plan must provide, at a minimum:

(a) For the retirement or elimination of:

(1) Not less than 300 megawatts of coal-fired electric generating capacity on or before December 31, 2014;

(2) In addition to the generating capacity retired or eliminated pursuant to subparagraph (1), not less than 250 megawatts of coal-fired electric generating capacity on or before December 31, 2017; and

(3) In addition to the generating capacity retired or eliminated pursuant to subparagraphs (1) and (2), not less than 250 megawatts of coal-fired electric generating capacity on or before December 31, 2019.

➥ ***For the purposes of this paragraph, the generating capacity of a coal-fired electric generating plant must be determined by reference to the most recent resource plan filed by the electric utility pursuant to NRS 704.741 and accepted by the Commission pursuant to NRS 704.751.***

(b) That the electric utility will use commercially reasonable efforts to construct, acquire or contract for 600 megawatts of electric generating capacity from renewable energy facilities. The electric utility shall:

(1) Issue a request for proposals for 100 megawatts of electric generating capacity from new renewable energy facilities on or before December 31, 2014;

(2) In addition to the request for proposals issued pursuant to subparagraph (1), issue a request for proposals for 100 megawatts of electric generating capacity from new renewable energy facilities on or before December 31, 2015;

(3) In addition to the requests for proposals issued pursuant to subparagraphs (1) and (2), issue a request for proposals for 100 megawatts of electric generating capacity from new renewable energy facilities on or before December 31, 2016;

(4) In addition to the requests for proposals issued pursuant to subparagraphs (1), (2) and (3), issue a request for proposals for 100 megawatts of electric generating capacity from new renewable energy facilities on or before December 31, 2017;

(5) In addition to the requests for proposals issued pursuant to subparagraphs (1) to (4), inclusive, issue a request for proposals for 50 megawatts of electric generating capacity from new renewable energy facilities on or before December 31, 2018;

(6) Review each proposal received pursuant to subparagraphs (1) to (5), inclusive, and negotiate, in good faith, to construct, acquire or contract with renewable energy facilities that will provide:

(I) The greatest economic benefit to this State;

(II) The greatest opportunity for the creation of new jobs in this State; and

(III) The best value to customers of the electric utility; and

(7) Use commercially reasonable efforts to begin construction on or before December 31, 2017, of a portion of new renewable energy facilities with a generating capacity of 150 megawatts to be owned and operated by the electric utility, and use commercially reasonable efforts to complete construction of such facilities on or before December 31, 2021.

➥ *For the purposes of this paragraph, the generating capacity of a renewable energy facility must be determined by the nameplate capacity of the facility.*

(c) That the electric utility will use commercially reasonable efforts to construct or acquire and own:

(1) Natural gas-fired electric generating plants with an electric generating capacity of between 500 megawatts and 550 megawatts on or before December 31, 2017; and

(2) In addition to the natural gas-fired electric generating plants described in subparagraph (1), natural gas-fired electric generating plants with an electric generating capacity between 200 megawatts and 250 megawatts on or before July 1, 2021, except that the electric utility shall not include in an emissions reduction and capacity replacement plan required pursuant to subsection 1 any construction, acquisition or ownership of natural gas-fired electric generating plants with an electric generating capacity of more than 750 megawatts.

(d) That the electric utility will make commercially reasonable efforts to deploy, on or before December 31, 2017, a demand response program operated by the electric utility to reduce peak demand by 80 megawatts of demand from commercial customers and 20 megawatts of demand from residential customers.

(e) A strategy for the commercially reasonable physical procurement of fixed-price natural gas by the electric utility.

(f) A plan for tracking and specifying the accounting treatment for all costs associated with the decommissioning of the coal-fired electric generating plants identified for retirement or elimination.

➥ *For the purposes of this subsection, an electric utility shall be deemed to own, acquire, retire or eliminate only its pro rata portion of any electric generating facility that is not wholly owned by the electric utility.*

3. In addition to the requirements for an emissions reduction and capacity replacement plan set forth in subsection 2, the plan may include additional utility facilities, electric generating plants, elements or programs, including, without limitation:

(a) The construction of natural gas pipelines necessary for the operation of any new natural gas-fired electric generating plants included in the plan;

(b) Entering into contracts for the transportation of natural gas necessary for the operation of any natural gas-fired electric generating plants included in the plan; and

(c) The construction of transmission lines and related infrastructure necessary for the operation or interconnection of

any renewable energy facilities and natural gas-fired electric generating plants included in the plan.

Sec. 8. *1. A renewable energy facility, electric generating plant or other facility, element or program which is identified for acquisition, construction or implementation in an emissions reduction and capacity replacement plan accepted by the Commission pursuant to NRS 704.751 shall be deemed to be a prudent investment. The electric utility may recover all just and reasonable costs of acquiring or planning and constructing such a facility or plant and implementing such an element or program.*

2. To recover all just and reasonable costs of implementing a demand response program included in an emissions reduction and capacity replacement plan accepted by the Commission pursuant to NRS 704.751, an electric utility shall defer and include in its rate base the costs of implementing the program.

3. An electric utility may recover all costs associated with the retirement or elimination of any coal-fired electric generating plant identified for retirement or elimination in an emissions reduction and capacity replacement plan accepted by the Commission pursuant to NRS 704.751. For the purposes of this subsection, the costs associated with the retirement or elimination of a coal-fired electric generating plant include, without limitation, any:

(a) Undepreciated balance associated with the retired or eliminated coal-fired electric generating plant;

(b) Decommissioning and remediation costs;

(c) Contract termination costs;

(d) Unused coal inventory; and

(e) Associated carrying charges.

Sec. 9. *1. An electric utility may, upon the completion of construction or acquisition of any renewable energy facility, natural gas-fired electric generating plant or other facility constructed or acquired pursuant to an emissions reduction and capacity replacement plan accepted by the Commission pursuant to NRS 704.751, file with the Commission a schedule which may include any new project-specific rate or rates necessary to provide for the recovery of a return on the electric utility's investment in the facility, depreciation of the utility's investment in the facility, the cost of operating and maintaining the facility, and any other costs directly related to the facility, including, without limitation, any federal, state or local taxes, except that such a schedule may not be filed for any facility that the Commission designates by regulation as a critical facility. A schedule filed pursuant to this subsection automatically becomes effective on the first day of the next calendar quarter following the filing of the schedule.*

2. The provisions of subsection 1 do not limit the Commission's authority to review the costs associated with a facility or to determine whether such costs are just and reasonable. The Commission shall review all rates included in a schedule filed pursuant to subsection 1 during the next general rate case proceeding of the electric utility. If the Commission determines that the rates were not just and reasonable, the Commission may take any steps necessary to ensure that an appropriate amount, including, without limitation, carrying charges, is returned to customers.

3. In addition to the schedule required to be filed pursuant to subsection 1, an electric utility shall, upon retirement of any coal-fired electric generating plant identified in an emissions reduction and capacity replacement plan, file with the Commission an additional schedule which provides a credit to customers of the electric utility to reflect reduced operation and maintenance expenses directly attributable to the retirement of the facility. A schedule filed pursuant to this subsection automatically becomes effective on the first day of the next calendar quarter following the filing of the schedule.

Sec. 10. *1. To ensure the remediation and, when possible, the reuse of any site used for the production of electricity from a coal-fired electric generating plant in this State, the Division of Environmental Protection of the State Department of Conservation and Natural Resources has exclusive jurisdiction to supervise and regulate the remediation of such sites, including, without limitation, exclusive authority to regulate and supervise the remediation of surface water and groundwater and solid-waste disposal operations located at such a site.*

2. The Division of Environmental Protection has exclusive authority to regulate emissions from any renewable energy facility or natural gas-fired electric generating plant constructed on a site previously used for the production of electricity from a coal-fired electric generating plant.

Sec. 11. *1. If, in any general rate proceeding filed by an electric utility before June 1, 2018, the increase in the electric utility's total revenue requirement would exceed 5 percent, the utility must propose a method or mechanism by which such excess may be mitigated. The Commission may approve such a rate method or mechanism so long as there is no adverse impact on the utility shareholders. If the mitigation method or mechanism approved by the Commission involves the deferred recovery of a portion of the rate increase, the utility shall calculate carrying charges on the unamortized balance of the regulatory asset.*

2. If any project-specific rate schedule filed with the Commission pursuant to subsection 1 of section 9 of this act would cause an increase in the electric utility's total revenue requirement in an amount greater than 5 percent, the utility shall limit the amount of the project-specific rate to an amount necessary to produce an increase of not more than 5 percent. The utility shall defer and include in a regulatory asset the amount of the increase in excess of 5 percent and calculate carrying charges on the unamortized balance of the regulatory asset.

3. The Commission shall allow the electric utility to begin recovering any amounts deferred in a regulatory asset pursuant to this section on January 1, 2022.

Sec. 12. ***1. An electric utility shall file with the Commission an amendment to the utility's emissions reduction and capacity replacement plan each time the utility requests approval and acceptance by the Commission of any contract with a new renewable energy facility as the result of a request for proposals pursuant to the current emissions reduction and capacity replacement plan. The Commission may approve and accept the renewable energy facility if the Commission determines that:***

(a) The facility is a renewable energy system as defined in NRS 704.7815; and

(b) The terms and conditions of the contract are just and reasonable and satisfy the capacity requirements set forth in subsection 2 of section 7 of this act.

2. In considering a contract pursuant to subsection 1, the Commission may give preference to those contracts or renewable energy facilities that will provide:

(a) The greatest economic benefit to this State;

(b) The greatest opportunity for the creation of new jobs in this State; and

(c) The best value to customers of the electric utility.

Sec. 13. ***The Commission shall adopt any regulations necessary to carry out the provisions of sections 2 to 13, inclusive, of this act.***

Sec. 14. NRS 704.100 is hereby amended to read as follows:

704.100 1. Except as otherwise provided in NRS 704.075 and 704.68861 to 704.68887, inclusive, ***and section 9 of this act*** or as may otherwise be provided by the Commission pursuant to NRS 704.095 or 704.097:

(a) A public utility shall not make changes in any schedule, unless the public utility:

(1) Files with the Commission an application to make the proposed changes and the Commission approves the proposed changes pursuant to NRS 704.110; or

(2) Files the proposed changes with the Commission using a letter of advice in accordance with the provisions of paragraph (f).

(b) A public utility shall adjust its rates on a quarterly basis between annual rate adjustment applications pursuant to subsection 8 of NRS 704.110 based on changes in the public utility's recorded costs of natural gas purchased for resale.

(c) An electric utility shall, between annual deferred energy accounting adjustment applications filed pursuant to NRS 704.187, adjust its rates on a quarterly basis pursuant to subsection 10 of NRS 704.110.

(d) A public utility shall post copies of all proposed schedules and all new or amended schedules in the same offices and in substantially the same form, manner and places as required by NRS 704.070 for the posting of copies of schedules that are currently in force.

(e) A public utility may not set forth as justification for a rate increase any items of expense or rate base that previously have been considered and disallowed by the Commission, unless those items are clearly identified in the application and new facts or considerations of policy for each item are advanced in the application to justify a reversal of the prior decision of the Commission.

(f) Except as otherwise provided in paragraph (g), if the proposed change in any schedule does not change any rate or will result in an increase in annual gross operating revenue, as certified by the public utility, in an amount that does not exceed $2,500:

(1) The public utility may file the proposed change with the Commission using a letter of advice in lieu of filing an application; and

(2) The Commission shall determine whether it should dispense with a hearing regarding the proposed change.

(g) If the applicant is a small-scale provider of last resort and the proposed change in any schedule will result in an increase in annual gross operating revenue, as certified by the applicant, in an amount that does not exceed $50,000 or 10 percent of the applicant's annual gross operating revenue, whichever is less, the Commission shall determine whether it should dispense with a hearing regarding the proposed change.

(h) In making the determination pursuant to paragraph (f) or (g), the Commission shall first consider all timely written protests, any presentation that the Regulatory Operations Staff of the Commission may desire to present, the application of the public utility and any other matters deemed relevant by the Commission.

2. As used in this section, "electric utility" has the meaning ascribed to it in NRS 704.187.

Sec. 15. NRS 704.110 is hereby amended to read as follows:

704.110 Except as otherwise provided in NRS 704.075 and 704.68861 to 704.68887, inclusive, ***and section 9 of this act,*** or as may otherwise be provided by the Commission pursuant to NRS 704.095 or 704.097:

1. If a public utility files with the Commission an application to make changes in any schedule, including, without limitation, changes that will result in a discontinuance, modification or restriction of service, the Commission shall investigate the propriety of the proposed changes to determine whether to approve or disapprove the proposed changes. If an electric utility files such an application and the application is a general rate application or an annual deferred energy accounting adjustment application, the Consumer's Advocate shall be deemed a party of record.

2. Except as otherwise provided in subsection 3, if a public utility files with the Commission an application to make changes in any schedule, the Commission shall, not later than 210 days after the date on which the application is filed, issue a written order approving or disapproving, in whole or in part, the proposed changes.

3. If a public utility files with the Commission a general rate application, the public utility shall submit with its application a statement showing the recorded results of revenues, expenses, investments and costs of capital for its most recent 12 months for which data were available when the application was prepared. Except as otherwise provided in subsection 4, in determining whether to approve or disapprove any increased rates, the Commission shall consider evidence in support of the increased rates based upon actual recorded results of operations for the same 12 months, adjusted for increased revenues, any increased investment in facilities, increased expenses for depreciation, certain other operating expenses as approved by the Commission and changes in the costs of securities which are known and are measurable with reasonable accuracy at the time of filing and which will become effective within 6 months after the last month of those 12 months, but the public utility shall not place into effect any increased rates until the changes have been experienced and certified by the public utility to the Commission and the Commission has approved the increased rates. The Commission shall also consider evidence supporting expenses for depreciation, calculated on an annual basis, applicable to major components of the public utility's plant placed into service during the recorded test period or the period for certification as set forth in the application. Adjustments to revenues, operating expenses and costs of securities must be calculated on an annual basis. Within 90 days after the date

on which the certification required by this subsection is filed with the Commission, or within the period set forth in subsection 2, whichever time is longer, the Commission shall make such order in reference to the increased rates as is required by this chapter. The following public utilities shall each file a general rate application pursuant to this subsection based on the following schedule:

(a) An electric utility that primarily serves less densely populated counties shall file a general rate application not later than 5 p.m. on or before the first Monday in June 2010, and at least once every 36 months thereafter.

(b) An electric utility that primarily serves densely populated counties shall file a general rate application not later than 5 p.m. on or before the first Monday in June 2011, and at least once every 36 months thereafter.

(c) A public utility that furnishes water for municipal, industrial or domestic purposes or services for the disposal of sewage, or both, which had an annual gross operating revenue of $2,000,000 or more for at least 1 year during the immediately preceding 3 years and which had not filed a general rate application with the Commission on or after July 1, 2005, shall file a general rate application on or before June 30, 2008, and at least once every 36 months thereafter unless waived by the Commission pursuant to standards adopted by regulation of the Commission. If a public utility furnishes both water and services for the disposal of sewage, its annual gross operating revenue for each service must be considered separately for determining whether the public utility meets the requirements of this paragraph for either service.

(d) A public utility that furnishes water for municipal, industrial or domestic purposes or services for the disposal of sewage, or both, which had an annual gross operating revenue of $2,000,000 or more for at least 1 year during the immediately preceding 3 years and which had filed a general rate application with the Commission on or after July 1, 2005, shall file a general rate application on or before June 30, 2009, and at least once every 36 months thereafter unless waived by the Commission pursuant to standards adopted by regulation of the Commission. If a public utility furnishes both water and services for the disposal of sewage, its annual gross operating revenue for each service must be considered separately for determining whether the public utility meets the requirements of this paragraph for either service.

➥ The Commission shall adopt regulations setting forth standards for waivers pursuant to paragraphs (c) and (d) and for including the costs incurred by the public utility in preparing and presenting the general rate application before the effective date of any change in rates.

4. In addition to submitting the statement required pursuant to subsection 3, a public utility may submit with its general rate application a statement showing the effects, on an annualized basis, of all expected changes in circumstances. If such a statement is filed, it must include all increases and decreases in revenue and expenses which may occur within 210 days after the date on which its general rate application is filed with the Commission if such expected changes in circumstances are reasonably known and are measurable with reasonable accuracy. If a public utility submits such a statement, the public utility has the burden of proving that the expected changes in circumstances set forth in the statement are reasonably known and are measurable with reasonable accuracy. The Commission shall consider expected changes in circumstances to be reasonably known and measurable with reasonable accuracy if the expected changes in circumstances consist of specific and identifiable events or programs rather than general trends, patterns or developments, have an objectively high probability of occurring to the degree, in the amount and at the time expected, are primarily measurable by recorded or verifiable revenues and expenses and are easily and objectively calculated, with the calculation of the expected changes relying only secondarily on estimates, forecasts, projections or budgets. If the Commission determines that the public utility has met its burden of proof:

(a) The Commission shall consider the statement submitted pursuant to this subsection and evidence relevant to the statement, including all reasonable projected or forecasted offsets in revenue and expenses that are directly attributable to or associated with the expected changes in circumstances under consideration, in addition to the statement required pursuant to subsection 3 as evidence in establishing just and reasonable rates for the public utility; and

(b) The public utility is not required to file with the Commission the certification that would otherwise be required pursuant to subsection 3.

5. If a public utility files with the Commission an application to make changes in any schedule and the Commission does not issue a final written order regarding the proposed changes within the time required by this section, the proposed changes shall be deemed to be approved by the Commission.

6. If a public utility files with the Commission a general rate application, the public utility shall not file with the Commission another general rate application until all pending general rate applications filed by that public utility have been decided by the Commission unless, after application and hearing, the Commission determines that a substantial financial emergency would exist if the public utility is not permitted to file another general rate application

sooner. The provisions of this subsection do not prohibit the public utility from filing with the Commission, while a general rate application is pending, an application to recover the increased cost of purchased fuel, purchased power, or natural gas purchased for resale pursuant to subsection 7, a quarterly rate adjustment pursuant to subsection 8 or 10, any information relating to deferred accounting requirements pursuant to NRS 704.185 or an annual deferred energy accounting adjustment application pursuant to NRS 704.187, if the public utility is otherwise authorized to so file by those provisions.

7. A public utility may file an application to recover the increased cost of purchased fuel, purchased power, or natural gas purchased for resale once every 30 days. The provisions of this subsection do not apply to:

(a) An electric utility which is required to adjust its rates on a quarterly basis pursuant to subsection 10; or

(b) A public utility which purchases natural gas for resale and which adjusts its rates on a quarterly basis pursuant to subsection 8.

8. A public utility which purchases natural gas for resale must request approval from the Commission to adjust its rates on a quarterly basis between annual rate adjustment applications based on changes in the public utility's recorded costs of natural gas purchased for resale. A public utility which purchases natural gas for resale and which adjusts its rates on a quarterly basis may request approval from the Commission to make quarterly adjustments to its deferred energy accounting adjustment. The Commission shall approve or deny such a request not later than 120 days after the application is filed with the Commission. The Commission may approve the request if the Commission finds that approval of the request is in the public interest. If the Commission approves a request to make quarterly adjustments to the deferred energy accounting adjustment of a public utility pursuant to this subsection, any quarterly adjustment to the deferred energy accounting adjustment must not exceed 2.5 cents per therm of natural gas. If the balance of the public utility's deferred account varies by less than 5 percent from the public utility's annual recorded costs of natural gas which are used to calculate quarterly rate adjustments, the deferred energy accounting adjustment must be set to zero cents per therm of natural gas.

9. If the Commission approves a request to make any rate adjustments on a quarterly basis pursuant to subsection 8:

(a) The public utility shall file written notice with the Commission before the public utility makes a quarterly rate adjustment. A quarterly rate adjustment is not subject to the requirements for notice and a hearing pursuant to NRS 703.320 or

the requirements for a consumer session pursuant to subsection 1 of NRS 704.069.

(b) The public utility shall provide written notice of each quarterly rate adjustment to its customers by including the written notice with a customer's regular monthly bill. The public utility shall begin providing such written notice to its customers not later than 30 days after the date on which the public utility files its written notice with the Commission pursuant to paragraph (a). The written notice that is included with a customer's regular monthly bill:

(1) Must be printed separately on fluorescent-colored paper and must not be attached to the pages of the bill; and

(2) Must include the following:

(I) The total amount of the increase or decrease in the public utility's revenues from the rate adjustment, stated in dollars and as a percentage;

(II) The amount of the monthly increase or decrease in charges for each class of customer or class of service, stated in dollars and as a percentage;

(III) A statement that customers may send written comments or protests regarding the rate adjustment to the Commission;

(IV) A statement that the transactions and recorded costs of natural gas which are the basis for any quarterly rate adjustment will be reviewed for reasonableness and prudence in the next proceeding held by the Commission to review the annual rate adjustment application pursuant to paragraph (d); and

(V) Any other information required by the Commission.

(c) The public utility shall file an annual rate adjustment application with the Commission. The annual rate adjustment application is subject to the requirements for notice and a hearing pursuant to NRS 703.320 and the requirements for a consumer session pursuant to subsection 1 of NRS 704.069.

(d) The proceeding regarding the annual rate adjustment application must include a review of each quarterly rate adjustment and the transactions and recorded costs of natural gas included in each quarterly filing and the annual rate adjustment application. There is no presumption of reasonableness or prudence for any quarterly rate adjustment or for any transactions or recorded costs of natural gas included in any quarterly rate adjustment or the annual rate adjustment application, and the public utility has the burden of proving reasonableness and prudence in the proceeding.

(e) The Commission shall not allow the public utility to recover any recorded costs of natural gas which were the result of any practice or transaction that was unreasonable or was undertaken,

managed or performed imprudently by the public utility, and the Commission shall order the public utility to adjust its rates if the Commission determines that any recorded costs of natural gas included in any quarterly rate adjustment or the annual rate adjustment application were not reasonable or prudent.

10. An electric utility shall adjust its rates on a quarterly basis based on changes in the electric utility's recorded costs of purchased fuel or purchased power. In addition to adjusting its rates on a quarterly basis, an electric utility may request approval from the Commission to make quarterly adjustments to its deferred energy accounting adjustment. The Commission shall approve or deny such a request not later than 120 days after the application is filed with the Commission. The Commission may approve the request if the Commission finds that approval of the request is in the public interest. If the Commission approves a request to make quarterly adjustments to the deferred energy accounting adjustment of an electric utility pursuant to this subsection, any quarterly adjustment to the deferred energy accounting adjustment must not exceed 0.25 cents per kilowatt-hour of electricity. If the balance of the electric utility's deferred account varies by less than 5 percent from the electric utility's annual recorded costs for purchased fuel or purchased power which are used to calculate quarterly rate adjustments, the deferred energy accounting adjustment must be set to zero cents per kilowatt-hour of electricity.

11. A quarterly rate adjustment filed pursuant to subsection 10 is subject to the following requirements:

(a) The electric utility shall file written notice with the Commission on or before August 15, 2007, and every quarter thereafter of the quarterly rate adjustment to be made by the electric utility for the following quarter. The first quarterly rate adjustment by the electric utility will take effect on October 1, 2007, and each subsequent quarterly rate adjustment will take effect every quarter thereafter. The first quarterly adjustment to a deferred energy accounting adjustment must be made pursuant to an order issued by the Commission approving the application of an electric utility to make quarterly adjustments to its deferred energy accounting adjustment. A quarterly rate adjustment is not subject to the requirements for notice and a hearing pursuant to NRS 703.320 or the requirements for a consumer session pursuant to subsection 1 of NRS 704.069.

(b) The electric utility shall provide written notice of each quarterly rate adjustment to its customers by including the written notice with a customer's regular monthly bill. The electric utility shall begin providing such written notice to its customers not later than 30 days after the date on which the electric utility files a written

notice with the Commission pursuant to paragraph (a). The written notice that is included with a customer's regular monthly bill:

(1) Must be printed separately on fluorescent-colored paper and must not be attached to the pages of the bill; and

(2) Must include the following:

(I) The total amount of the increase or decrease in the electric utility's revenues from the rate adjustment, stated in dollars and as a percentage;

(II) The amount of the monthly increase or decrease in charges for each class of customer or class of service, stated in dollars and as a percentage;

(III) A statement that customers may send written comments or protests regarding the rate adjustment to the Commission;

(IV) A statement that the transactions and recorded costs of purchased fuel or purchased power which are the basis for any quarterly rate adjustment will be reviewed for reasonableness and prudence in the next proceeding held by the Commission to review the annual deferred energy accounting adjustment application pursuant to paragraph (d); and

(V) Any other information required by the Commission.

(c) The electric utility shall file an annual deferred energy accounting adjustment application pursuant to NRS 704.187 with the Commission. The annual deferred energy accounting adjustment application is subject to the requirements for notice and a hearing pursuant to NRS 703.320 and the requirements for a consumer session pursuant to subsection 1 of NRS 704.069.

(d) The proceeding regarding the annual deferred energy accounting adjustment application must include a review of each quarterly rate adjustment and the transactions and recorded costs of purchased fuel and purchased power included in each quarterly filing and the annual deferred energy accounting adjustment application. There is no presumption of reasonableness or prudence for any quarterly rate adjustment or for any transactions or recorded costs of purchased fuel and purchased power included in any quarterly rate adjustment or the annual deferred energy accounting adjustment application, and the electric utility has the burden of proving reasonableness and prudence in the proceeding.

(e) The Commission shall not allow the electric utility to recover any recorded costs of purchased fuel and purchased power which were the result of any practice or transaction that was unreasonable or was undertaken, managed or performed imprudently by the electric utility, and the Commission shall order the electric utility to adjust its rates if the Commission determines that any recorded costs of purchased fuel and purchased power included in any quarterly

rate adjustment or the annual deferred energy accounting adjustment application were not reasonable or prudent.

12. If an electric utility files an annual deferred energy accounting adjustment application pursuant to subsection 11 and NRS 704.187 while a general rate application is pending, the electric utility shall:

(a) Submit with its annual deferred energy accounting adjustment application information relating to the cost of service and rate design; and

(b) Supplement its general rate application with the same information, if such information was not submitted with the general rate application.

13. A utility facility identified in a 3-year plan submitted pursuant to NRS 704.741 and accepted by the Commission for acquisition or construction pursuant to NRS 704.751 and the regulations adopted pursuant thereto shall be deemed to be a prudent investment. The utility may recover all just and reasonable costs of planning and constructing such a facility.

14. In regard to any rate or schedule approved or disapproved pursuant to this section, the Commission may, after a hearing:

(a) Upon the request of the utility, approve a new rate but delay the implementation of that new rate:

(1) Until a date determined by the Commission; and

(2) Under conditions as determined by the Commission, including, without limitation, a requirement that interest charges be included in the collection of the new rate; and

(b) Authorize a utility to implement a reduced rate for low-income residential customers.

15. The Commission may, upon request and for good cause shown, permit a public utility which purchases natural gas for resale or an electric utility to make a quarterly adjustment to its deferred energy accounting adjustment in excess of the maximum allowable adjustment pursuant to subsection 8 or 10.

16. A public utility which purchases natural gas for resale or an electric utility that makes quarterly adjustments to its deferred energy accounting adjustment pursuant to subsection 8 or 10 may submit to the Commission for approval an application to discontinue making quarterly adjustments to its deferred energy accounting adjustment and to subsequently make annual adjustments to its deferred energy accounting adjustment. The Commission may approve an application submitted pursuant to this subsection if the Commission finds that approval of the application is in the public interest.

17. As used in this section:

(a) "Deferred energy accounting adjustment" means the rate of a public utility which purchases natural gas for resale or an electric utility that is calculated by dividing the balance of a deferred account during a specified period by the total therms or kilowatt-hours which have been sold in the geographical area to which the rate applies during the specified period.

(b) "Electric utility" has the meaning ascribed to it in NRS 704.187.

(c) "Electric utility that primarily serves densely populated counties" means an electric utility that, with regard to the provision of electric service, derives more of its annual gross operating revenue in this State from customers located in counties whose population is 700,000 or more than it does from customers located in counties whose population is less than 700,000.

(d) "Electric utility that primarily serves less densely populated counties" means an electric utility that, with regard to the provision of electric service, derives more of its annual gross operating revenue in this State from customers located in counties whose population is less than 700,000 than it does from customers located in counties whose population is 700,000 or more.

Sec. 16. NRS 704.746 is hereby amended to read as follows:

704.746 1. After a utility has filed its plan pursuant to NRS 704.741, the Commission shall convene a public hearing on the adequacy of the plan.

2. The Commission shall determine the parties to the public hearing on the adequacy of the plan. A person or governmental entity may petition the Commission for leave to intervene as a party. The Commission must grant a petition to intervene as a party in the hearing if the person or entity has relevant material evidence to provide concerning the adequacy of the plan. The Commission may limit participation of an intervener in the hearing to avoid duplication and may prohibit continued participation in the hearing by an intervener if the Commission determines that continued participation will unduly broaden the issues, will not provide additional relevant material evidence or is not necessary to further the public interest.

3. In addition to any party to the hearing, any interested person may make comments to the Commission regarding the contents and adequacy of the plan.

4. After the hearing, the Commission shall determine whether:

(a) The forecast requirements of the utility are based on substantially accurate data and an adequate method of forecasting.

(b) The plan identifies and takes into account any present and projected reductions in the demand for energy that may result from measures to improve energy efficiency in the industrial,

commercial, residential and energy producing sectors of the area being served.

(c) The plan adequately demonstrates the economic, environmental and other benefits to this State and to the customers of the utility, associated with the following possible measures and sources of supply:

(1) Improvements in energy efficiency;

(2) Pooling of power;

(3) Purchases of power from neighboring states or countries;

(4) Facilities that operate on solar or geothermal energy or wind;

(5) Facilities that operate on the principle of cogeneration or hydrogeneration;

(6) Other generation facilities; and

(7) Other transmission facilities.

5. The Commission may give preference to the measures and sources of supply set forth in paragraph (c) of subsection 4 that:

(a) Provide the greatest economic and environmental benefits to the State;

(b) Are consistent with the provisions of this section; ~~[and]~~

(c) Provide levels of service that are adequate and reliable ~~[.]~~ ***and***

(d) Provide the greatest opportunity for the creation of new jobs in this State.

6. The Commission shall:

(a) Adopt regulations which determine the level of preference to be given to those measures and sources of supply; and

(b) Consider the value to the public of using water efficiently when it is determining those preferences.

7. The Commission shall:

(a) Consider the level of financial commitment from developers of renewable energy projects in each renewable energy zone, as designated pursuant to subsection 2 of NRS 704.741; and

(b) Adopt regulations establishing a process for considering such commitments including, without limitation, contracts for the sale of energy, leases of land and mineral rights, cash deposits and letters of credit.

8. The Commission shall accept any element of an emissions reduction and capacity replacement plan that:

(a) Is consistent with paragraphs (a) and (b) of subsection 2 of section 7 of this act unless the Commission determines that the acceptance of such elements of the plan would adversely impact the ability of the electric utility to provide levels of service that are adequate and reasonable; and

(b) Is consistent with paragraph (c) of subsection 2 of section 7 of this act so long as the Commission determines that the number of natural gas-fired electric generating plants proposed to be constructed, acquired or owned by the utility represents an appropriate mix of natural gas-fired electric generating units.

Sec. 17. NRS 704.751 is hereby amended to read as follows:

704.751 1. After a utility has filed the plan required pursuant to NRS 704.741, the Commission shall issue an order accepting the plan as filed or specifying any portions of the plan it deems to be inadequate:

(a) Within 135 days for any portion of the plan relating to the energy supply plan for the utility for the 3 years covered by the plan; and

(b) Within 180 days for all portions of the plan not described in paragraph (a).

2. If a utility files an amendment to a plan, the Commission shall issue an order accepting the amendment as filed or specifying any portions of the amendment it deems to be inadequate ~~[within]~~ ***:***

(a) Within 135 days ~~[of]~~ ***after*** the filing of the amendment ~~[.]~~ ***; or***

(b) Within 180 days after the filing of the amendment for all portions of the amendment which contain an element of the emissions reduction and capacity replacement plan.

3. All prudent and reasonable expenditures made to develop the utility's plan, including environmental, engineering and other studies, must be recovered from the rates charged to the utility's customers.

4. The Commission may accept a transmission plan submitted pursuant to subsection 4 of NRS 704.741 for a renewable energy zone if the Commission determines that the construction or expansion of transmission facilities would facilitate the utility meeting the portfolio standard, as defined in NRS 704.7805.

5. The Commission shall adopt regulations establishing the criteria for determining the adequacy of a transmission plan submitted pursuant to subsection 4 of NRS 704.741.

6. A utility that has filed an emissions reduction and capacity replacement plan which has been accepted by the Commission pursuant to NRS 704.751 shall take all reasonable steps necessary to acquire facilities and implement programs and elements identified in the emissions reduction and capacity replacement plan, regardless of whether such reasonable steps are taken within the 3 years covered by the plan required to be filed pursuant to NRS 704.741.

Sec. 18. NRS 704.7588 is hereby amended to read as follows:

704.7588 Except as otherwise provided in NRS 704.7591 ~~[.]~~ ***and sections 2 to 13, inclusive, of this act:***

1. Before July 1, 2003, an electric utility shall not dispose of a generation asset.

2. On or after July 1, 2003, an electric utility shall not dispose of a generation asset unless, before the disposal, the Commission approves the disposal by a written order issued in accordance with the provisions of this section.

3. Not sooner than January 1, 2003, an electric utility may file with the Commission an application to dispose of a generation asset on or after July 1, 2003. If an electric utility files such an application, the Commission shall not approve the application unless the Commission finds that the disposal of the generation asset will be in the public interest. The Commission shall issue a written order approving or disapproving the application. The Commission may base its approval of the application upon such terms, conditions or modifications as the Commission deems appropriate.

4. If an electric utility files an application to dispose of a generation asset, the Consumer's Advocate shall be deemed a party of record.

5. If the Commission approves an application to dispose of a generation asset before July 1, 2003, the order of the Commission approving the application:

(a) May not become effective sooner than July 1, 2003;

(b) Does not create any vested rights before the effective date of the order; and

(c) For the purposes of NRS 703.373, shall be deemed a final decision on the date on which the order is issued by the Commission.

Sec. 19. NRS 444.495 is hereby amended to read as follows:

444.495 "Solid waste management authority" means:

1. ~~[The]~~ ***Except as otherwise provided in subsection 2, the*** district board of health in any area in which a health district has been created pursuant to NRS 439.362 or 439.370 and in any area over which the board has authority pursuant to an interlocal agreement, if the board has adopted all regulations that are necessary to carry out the provisions of NRS 444.440 to 444.620, inclusive.

2. In all other areas of the State ~~[,]~~ ***and pursuant to section 10 of this act, at any site previously used for the production of electricity from a coal-fired electric generating plant in this State,*** the Division of Environmental Protection of the State Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.

Sec. 20. NRS 445B.500 is hereby amended to read as follows:

445B.500 1. Except as otherwise provided in this section and in NRS 445B.310 ~~[.]~~ ***and section 10 of this act:***

(a) The district board of health, county board of health or board of county commissioners in each county whose population is 100,000 or more shall establish a program for the control of air pollution and administer the program within its jurisdiction unless superseded.

(b) The program:

(1) Must include, without limitation, standards for the control of emissions, emergency procedures and variance procedures established by ordinance or local regulation which are equivalent to or stricter than those established by statute or state regulation;

(2) May, in a county whose population is 700,000 or more, include requirements for the creation, receipt and exchange for consideration of credits to reduce and control air contaminants in accordance with NRS 445B.508; and

(3) Must provide for adequate administration, enforcement, financing and staff.

(c) The district board of health, county board of health or board of county commissioners is designated as the air pollution control agency of the county for the purposes of NRS 445B.100 to 445B.640, inclusive, and the Federal Act insofar as it pertains to local programs, and that agency is authorized to take all action necessary to secure for the county the benefits of the Federal Act.

(d) Powers and responsibilities provided for in NRS 445B.210, 445B.240 to 445B.470, inclusive, 445B.560, 445B.570, 445B.580 and 445B.640 are binding upon and inure to the benefit of local air pollution control authorities within their jurisdiction.

2. The local air pollution control board shall carry out all provisions of NRS 445B.215 with the exception that notices of public hearings must be given in any newspaper, qualified pursuant to the provisions of chapter 238 of NRS, once a week for 3 weeks. The notice must specify with particularity the reasons for the proposed regulations and provide other informative details. NRS 445B.215 does not apply to the adoption of existing regulations upon transfer of authority as provided in NRS 445B.610.

3. In a county whose population is 700,000 or more, the local air pollution control board may delegate to an independent hearing officer or hearing board its authority to determine violations and levy administrative penalties for violations of the provisions of NRS 445B.100 to 445B.450, inclusive, and 445B.500 to 445B.640, inclusive, or any regulation adopted pursuant to those sections. If such a delegation is made, 17.5 percent of any penalty collected must be deposited in the county treasury in an account to be

administered by the local air pollution control board to a maximum of $17,500 per year. The money in the account may only be used to defray the administrative expenses incurred by the local air pollution control board in enforcing the provisions of NRS 445B.100 to 445B.640, inclusive. The remainder of the penalty must be deposited in the county school district fund of the county where the violation occurred and must be accounted for separately in the fund. A school district may spend the money received pursuant to this section only in accordance with an annual spending plan that is approved by the local air pollution control board and shall submit an annual report to that board detailing the expenditures of the school district under the plan. A local air pollution control board shall approve an annual spending plan if the proposed expenditures set forth in the plan are reasonable and limited to:

(a) Programs of education on topics relating to air quality; and

(b) Projects to improve air quality, including, without limitation, the purchase and installation of equipment to retrofit school buses of the school district to use biodiesel, compressed natural gas or a similar fuel formulated to reduce emissions from the amount of emissions produced by the use of traditional fuels such as gasoline and diesel fuel,

➥ which are consistent with the state implementation plan adopted by this State pursuant to 42 U.S.C. §§ 7410 and 7502.

4. Any county whose population is less than 100,000 or any city may meet the requirements of this section for administration and enforcement through cooperative or interlocal agreement with one or more other counties, or through agreement with the State, or may establish its own program for the control of air pollution. If the county establishes such a program, it is subject to the approval of the Commission.

5. No district board of health, county board of health or board of county commissioners may adopt any regulation or establish a compliance schedule, variance order or other enforcement action relating to the control of emissions from plants which generate electricity by using steam produced by the burning of fossil fuel.

6. As used in this section, "plants which generate electricity by using steam produced by the burning of fossil fuel" means plants that burn fossil fuels in a boiler to produce steam for the production of electricity. The term does not include any plant which uses technology for a simple or combined cycle combustion turbine, regardless of whether the plant includes duct burners.

Sec. 21. 1. There is hereby appropriated from the State General Fund to the Legislative Fund the sum of $150,000 for the purpose of contracting with a consultant to conduct a study of the

impact of energy-related tax incentives on renewable energy development in this State.

2. Any remaining balance of the appropriation made by subsection 1 must not be committed for expenditure after June 30, 2015, and any portion of the appropriated money remaining must not be spent for any purpose after September 18, 2015, and must be reverted to the State General Fund on or before September 18, 2015.

Sec. 22. This act becomes effective upon passage and approval.