

## CHAPTER 216C

## ENERGY PLANNING AND CONSERVATION

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**216C.051 LEGISLATIVE ELECTRIC ENERGY TASK FORCE.**

Subdivision 1. [Repealed, 1Sp2003 c 11 art 3 s 16]

*[For text of subd 2, see M.S.2002]*

**Subd. 3. Technical and economic considerations, analyses, and recommendations.**

(a) In light of the electric energy guidelines established in subdivision 7 and utility resource plans and competitive bidding dockets before the commission, the task force shall gather information and make recommendations to the legislature regarding potential electric energy resources. The task force may contract with one or more energy policy experts and energy economists to assist it in its analysis. The task force may not contract for service nor employ any person who was involved in any capacity in any portion of any proceeding before the Public Utilities Commission, the administrative law judge, the state Court of Appeals, or the United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission related to the dry cask storage proposal on Prairie Island. The task force must gather information on at least the following electric energy resources, but may expand its inquiry as warranted by the information collected:

- (1) wind energy;
- (2) hydrogen as a fuel carrier produced from renewable and fossil fuel resources;
- (3) biomass;
- (4) decomposition gases produced by solid waste management facilities;
- (5) solid waste as a direct fuel or refuse-derived fuel; and
- (6) clean coal technology.

(b) In evaluating these electric energy resources, the task force must consider at least the following:

(1) to the best of forecasting abilities, how much electric generation capacity and demand for electric energy is necessary to maintain a strong economy and a high quality of life in the state over the next 15 to 20 years; how is this demand level affected by achievement of the maximum reasonably feasible and cost-effective demand-side management and generation and distribution efficiencies;

(2) what alternative forms of energy can provide a stable supply of energy and are producible and sustainable in the state and at what cost;

(3) what are the costs to the state and ratepayers to ensure that new electric energy generation utilizes less environmentally damaging sources; how do those costs change as the time frame for development and implementation of new generation sources is compressed;

(4) what are the implications for delivery systems for energy produced in areas of the state that do not now have high-volume transmission capability; are new transmission technologies being developed that can address some of the concerns with transmission; can a more dispersed electric generation system lessen the need for long-distance transmission;

(5) what are the actual costs and benefits of purchasing electricity and fuel to generate electricity from outside the state; what are the present costs to the state's economy of exporting a large percentage of the state's energy dollars and what is the future economic impact of continuing to do so;

(6) are there benefits to be had from a large immediate investment in quickly implementing alternative electric energy sources in terms of developing an exportable

technology and/or commodity; is it feasible to turn around the flow of dollars for energy so that the state imports dollars and exports energy and energy technology; what is a reasonable time frame for the shift if it is possible;

(7) are there taxation or regulatory barriers to developing more sustainable and less problematic electric energy generation; what are they specifically and how can they be specifically addressed;

(8) can an approach be developed that moves quickly to development and implementation of alternative energy sources that can be forgiving of interim failures but that is also sufficiently deliberate to ensure ultimate success on a large scale; and

(9) in what specific ways can the state assist regional energy suppliers to accelerate phasing out energy production processes that produce wastes or emissions that must necessarily be carefully controlled and monitored to minimize adverse effects on the environment and human health and to assist in developing and implementing base load energy production that both prevents or minimizes by its nature adverse environmental and human health effects and utilizes resources that are available or producible in the state.

(c) The task force must study issues related to the transportation of spent nuclear fuel from this state to interim or permanent repositories outside this state. The task force must also gather information on at least the following factors, but may expand its inquiry as warranted by the information collected:

(1) Minnesota's actual and projected electricity demand;

(2) electricity export potential;

(3) inventory of energy resources currently used to generate all electricity sold in Minnesota and an analysis of the social, economic, and environmental benefits and burdens associated with each energy resource;

(4) electricity demand savings from greater efficiency; and

(5) job growth and economic development potential.

(d) The public utility that owns the Prairie Island and Monticello nuclear generation facilities shall update the reports required under section 116C.772, subdivisions 3 to 5, and shall submit those updates periodically to the Public Utilities Commission with the utility's resource plan filing under section 216B.2422 and to the task force.

Subd. 4. [Repealed, 1Sp2003 c 11 art 3 s 16]

Subd. 4a. **Report and recommendations.** By January 15, 2005, and every two years thereafter, the task force shall submit a report to the chairs of the committees in the house of representatives and the senate that have responsibility for energy and for environmental and natural resources issues that contains an overview of information gathered and analyses that have been prepared, and specific recommendations, if any, for legislative action that will ensure development and implementation of electric energy policy that will provide the state with adequate, renewable, and economic electric power for the long term. The report shall also identify issues that must be addressed to provide Minnesotans with adequate electricity from in-state renewable energy sources for the long term and export to adjacent states.

Subd. 5. [Repealed, 1Sp2003 c 11 art 3 s 16]

Subd. 6. **Assessment; appropriation.** On request by the cochairs of the Legislative Task Force and after approval of the Legislative Coordinating Commission, the commissioner of commerce shall assess from all public utilities, generation and transmission cooperative electric associations, and municipal power agencies providing electric or natural gas services in Minnesota, in addition to assessments made under section 216B.62, the amount requested for the operation of the task force not to exceed \$250,000 in a fiscal year. The amount assessed under this section is appropriated to the director of the Legislative Coordinating Commission for those purposes, and is available until expended. The department shall apportion those costs among all energy utilities in proportion to their respective gross operating revenues from the sale of gas or electric service within the state during the last calendar year. For the purposes of

administrative efficiency, the department shall assess energy utilities and issue bills in accordance with the billing and assessment procedures provided in section 216B.62, to the extent that these procedures do not conflict with this subdivision.

*[For text of subds 7 and 8, see M.S.2002]*

**Subd. 9. Expiration.** This section is repealed June 30, 2007.

**History:** 1Sp2003 c 11 art 3 s 6-9

## 216C.052 RELIABILITY ADMINISTRATOR.

*[For text of subd. 1, see M.S.2002]*

**Subd. 2. Administrative issues.** (a) The commissioner may select the administrator who shall serve for a four-year term. The administrator may not have been a party or a participant in a commission energy proceeding for at least one year prior to selection by the commissioner. The commissioner shall oversee and direct the work of the administrator, annually review the expenses of the administrator, and annually approve the budget of the administrator. The administrator may hire staff and may contract for technical expertise in performing duties when existing state resources are required for other state responsibilities or when special expertise is required. The salary of the administrator is governed by section 15A.0815, subdivision 2.

(b) Costs relating to a specific proceeding, analysis, or project are not general administrative costs. For purposes of this section, "energy utility" means public utilities, generation and transmission cooperative electric associations, and municipal power agencies providing natural gas or electric service in the state.

(c) The Department of Commerce shall pay:

(1) the general administrative costs of the administrator, not to exceed \$1,000,000 in a fiscal year, and shall assess energy utilities for those administrative costs. These costs must be consistent with the budget approved by the commissioner under paragraph (a). The department shall apportion the costs among all energy utilities in proportion to their respective gross operating revenues from sales of gas or electric service within the state during the last calendar year, and shall then render a bill to each utility on a regular basis; and

(2) costs relating to a specific proceeding analysis or project and shall render a bill to the specific energy utility or utilities participating in the proceeding, analysis, or project directly, either at the conclusion of a particular proceeding, analysis, or project, or from time to time during the course of the proceeding, analysis, or project.

(d) For purposes of administrative efficiency, the department shall assess energy utilities and issue bills in accordance with the billing and assessment procedures provided in section 216B.62, to the extent that these procedures do not conflict with this subdivision. The amount of the bills rendered by the department under paragraph (c) must be paid by the energy utility into an account in the special revenue fund in the state treasury within 30 days from the date of billing and is appropriated to the commissioner for the purposes provided in this section. The commission shall approve or approve as modified a rate schedule providing for the automatic adjustment of charges to recover amounts paid by utilities under this section. All amounts assessed under this section are in addition to amounts appropriated to the commission and the department by other law.

**Subd. 3. Assessment and appropriation.** In addition to the amount noted in subdivision 2, the commissioner may assess utilities, using the mechanism specified in that subdivision, up to an additional \$500,000 annually through June 30, 2006. The amounts assessed under this subdivision are appropriated to the commissioner, and some or all of the amounts assessed may be transferred to the commissioner of administration, for the purposes specified in section 16B.325 and Laws 2001, chapter 212, article 1, section 3, as needed to implement those sections.

[For text of subd 4, see M.S.2002]

**History:** 1Sp2003 c 11 art 3 s 10,11

### 216C.13 POSTSECONDARY ENERGY EDUCATION.

The commissioner, in consultation with the commissioner of education, the Higher Education Services Office, the Board of Trustees of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities, and the Board of Regents of the University of Minnesota, shall assist in the development and implementation of adult and postsecondary energy education programs.

**History:** 2003 c 130 s 12

### 216C.40 [Expired, 1993 c 254 s 6]

### 216C.41 RENEWABLE ENERGY PRODUCTION INCENTIVE.

Subdivision 1. **Definitions.** (a) The definitions in this subdivision apply to this section.

(b) "Qualified hydroelectric facility" means a hydroelectric generating facility in this state that:

(1) is located at the site of a dam; if the dam was in existence as of March 31, 1994; and

(2) begins generating electricity after July 1, 1994, or generates electricity after substantial refurbishing of a facility that begins after July 1, 2001.

(c) "Qualified wind energy conversion facility" means a wind energy conversion system in this state that:

(1) produces two megawatts or less of electricity as measured by nameplate rating and begins generating electricity after December 31, 1996, and before July 1, 1999;

(2) begins generating electricity after June 30, 1999, produces two megawatts or less of electricity as measured by nameplate rating, and is:

(i) owned by an entity that is not prohibited from owning agricultural land under section 500.24 and that owns the land where the facility is sighted;

(ii) owned by a Minnesota small business as defined in section 645.445;

(iii) owned by a Minnesota nonprofit organization;

(iv) owned by a tribal council if the facility is located within the boundaries of the reservation;

(v) owned by a Minnesota municipal utility or a Minnesota cooperative electric association; or

(vi) owned by a Minnesota political subdivision or local government, including, but not limited to, a county, statutory or home rule charter city, town, school district, or any other local or regional governmental organization such as a board, commission, or association; or

(3) begins generating electricity after June 30, 1999, produces seven megawatts or less of electricity as measured by nameplate rating, and:

(i) is owned by a cooperative organized under chapter 308A other than a Minnesota cooperative electric association; and

(ii) all shares and membership in the cooperative are held by an entity that is not prohibited from owning agricultural land under section 500.24.

(d) "Qualified on-farm biogas recovery facility" means an anaerobic digester system that:

(1) is located at the site of an agricultural operation;

(2) is owned by an entity that is not prohibited from owning agricultural land under section 500.24 and that owns or rents the land where the facility is located; and

(3) begins generating electricity after July 1, 2001.

(e) "Anaerobic digester system" means a system of components that processes animal waste based on the absence of oxygen and produces gas used to generate electricity.

Subd. 2. **Incentive payment; appropriation.** (a) Incentive payments must be made according to this section to (1) a qualified on-farm biogas recovery facility, (2) the owner or operator of a qualified hydropower facility or qualified wind energy conversion facility for electric energy generated and sold by the facility, (3) a publicly owned hydropower facility for electric energy that is generated by the facility and used by the owner of the facility outside the facility, or (4) the owner of a publicly owned dam that is in need of substantial repair, for electric energy that is generated by a hydropower facility at the dam and the annual incentive payments will be used to fund the structural repairs and replacement of structural components of the dam, or to retire debt incurred to fund those repairs.

(b) Payment may only be made upon receipt by the commissioner of finance of an incentive payment application that establishes that the applicant is eligible to receive an incentive payment and that satisfies other requirements the commissioner deems necessary. The application must be in a form and submitted at a time the commissioner establishes.

(c) There is annually appropriated from the general fund to the commissioner of commerce sums sufficient to make the payments required under this section, other than the amounts funded by the renewable development account as specified in subdivision 5a.

Subd. 3. **Eligibility window.** Payments may be made under this section only for electricity generated:

(1) from a qualified hydroelectric facility that is operational and generating electricity before December 31, 2005;

(2) from a qualified wind energy conversion facility that is operational and generating electricity before January 1, 2007; or

(3) from a qualified on-farm biogas recovery facility from July 1, 2001; through December 31, 2017.

Subd. 4. **Payment period.** (a) A facility may receive payments under this section for a ten-year period. No payment under this section may be made for electricity generated:

(1) by a qualified hydroelectric facility after December 31, 2017;

(2) by a qualified wind energy conversion facility after December 31, 2017; or

(3) by a qualified on-farm biogas recovery facility after December 31, 2015.

(b) The payment period begins and runs consecutively from the date the facility begins generating electricity or, in the case of refurbishment of a hydropower facility, after substantial repairs to the hydropower facility dam funded by the incentive payments are initiated.

Subd. 5. **Amount of payment; wind facilities limit.** (a) An incentive payment is based on the number of kilowatt hours of electricity generated. The amount of the payment is:

(1) for a facility described under subdivision 2, paragraph (a), clause (4), 1.0 cent per kilowatt hour; and

(2) for all other facilities, 1.5 cents per kilowatt hour.

For electricity generated by qualified wind energy conversion facilities, the incentive payment under this section is limited to no more than 100 megawatts of nameplate capacity.

(b) For wind energy conversion systems installed and contracted for after January 1, 2002, the total size of a wind energy conversion system under this section must be determined according to this paragraph. Unless the systems are interconnected with different distribution systems, the nameplate capacity of one wind energy conversion

system must be combined with the nameplate capacity of any other wind energy conversion system that is:

- (1) located within five miles of the wind energy conversion system;
- (2) constructed within the same calendar year as the wind energy conversion system; and
- (3) under common ownership.

In the case of a dispute, the commissioner of commerce shall determine the total size of the system, and shall draw all reasonable inferences in favor of combining the systems.

(c) In making a determination under paragraph (b), the commissioner of commerce may determine that two wind energy conversion systems are under common ownership when the underlying ownership structure contains similar persons or entities, even if the ownership shares differ between the two systems. Wind energy conversion systems are not under common ownership solely because the same person or entity provided equity financing for the systems.

Subd. 5a. **Renewable development account.** The Department of Commerce shall authorize payment of the renewable energy production incentive to wind energy conversion systems for 100 megawatts of nameplate capacity in addition to the capacity authorized under subdivision 5 and to on-farm biogas recovery facilities. Payment of the incentive shall be made from the renewable energy development account as provided under section 116C.779, subdivision 2.

*[For text of subd 6, see M.S.2002]*

Subd. 7. **Eligibility process.** (a) A qualifying project is eligible for the incentive on the date the commissioner receives:

- (1) an application for payment of the incentive;
- (2) one of the following:
  - (i) a copy of a signed power purchase agreement;
  - (ii) a copy of a binding agreement other than a power purchase agreement to sell electricity generated by the project to a third person; or
  - (iii) if the project developer or owner will sell electricity to its own members or customers, a copy of the purchase order for equipment to construct the project with a delivery date and a copy of a signed receipt for a nonrefundable deposit; and
- (3) any other information the commissioner deems necessary to determine whether the proposed project qualifies for the incentive under this section.

(b) The commissioner shall determine whether a project qualifies for the incentive and respond in writing to the applicant approving or denying the application within 15 working days of receipt of the information required in paragraph (a). A project that is not operational within 18 months of receipt of a letter of approval is no longer approved for the incentive. The commissioner shall notify an applicant of potential loss of approval not less than 60 days prior to the end of the 18-month period. Eligibility for a project that loses approval may be reestablished as of the date the commissioner receives a new completed application.

**History:** *1Sp2003 c 11 art 2 s 9-15*

**NOTE:** Subdivision 1 was also amended by Laws 2003, chapter 128, article 3, section 44, to read as follows:

"Subdivision 1. **DEFINITIONS.** (a) The definitions in this subdivision apply to this section.

(b) "Qualified hydroelectric facility" means a hydroelectric generating facility in this state that:

- (1) is located at the site of a dam, if the dam was in existence as of March 31, 1994; and
- (2) begins generating electricity after July 1, 1994, or generates electricity after substantial refurbishing of a facility that begins after July 1, 2001.

(c) "Qualified wind energy conversion facility" means a wind energy conversion system that:

- (1) produces two megawatts or less of electricity as measured by nameplate rating and begins generating electricity after December 31, 1996, and before July 1, 1999;

- (2) begins generating electricity after June 30, 1999, produces two megawatts or less of electricity as measured by nameplate rating, and is:

- (j) owned by a resident of Minnesota or an entity that is organized under the laws of this state and is not prohibited from owning agricultural land under section 500.24;
  - (ii) owned by a Minnesota small business as defined in section 645.445;
  - (iii) owned by a nonprofit organization; or
  - (iv) owned by a tribal council if the facility is located within the boundaries of the reservation; or
- (3) begins generating electricity after June 30, 1999, produces seven megawatts or less of electricity as measured by nameplate rating, and:
- (i) is owned by a cooperative organized under chapter 308A; and
  - (ii) all shares and membership in the cooperative are held by natural persons or estates, at least 51 percent of whom reside in a county or contiguous to a county where the wind energy production facilities of the cooperative are located.
- (d) "Qualified on-farm biogas recovery facility" means an anaerobic digester system that:
- (1) is located at the site of an agricultural operation;
  - (2) is owned by a natural person who owns or rents the land where the facility is located; and
  - (3) begins generating electricity after July 1, 2001.
- (e) "Anaerobic digester system" means a system of components that processes animal waste based on the absence of oxygen and produces gas used to generate electricity."