

REVENUE: No revenue impact

FISCAL: Fiscal statement issued

Action: Do Pass as Amended and Be Printed Engrossed

Vote: 3 - 1 - 1

Yeas: Atkinson, Prozanski, Avakian

Nays: Beyer

Exc.: Bates

Prepared By: Sue Marshall, Administrator

Meeting Dates: 5/17

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: Provides that public improvement contracts for construction or for certain reconstruction or major renovation projects of public buildings are considered to contain an amount equal to at least 1.5 percent of the total contract price for inclusion of appropriate solar energy technology. Provides exceptions. Requires the Department of Energy to develop forms and to report to the Legislative Assembly in 2009 and 2011 on the use of solar energy technology in construction, reconstruction or major renovation of public buildings.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Whether schools that receive state funds for design or construction are subject to the measure
- Determining percentage of solar energy utilized by a building
- Exempting utility pump stations
- Flexibility of application to include appropriate active and passive solar energy applications
- Encouraging development of the solar energy industry

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT: Adds definition of ‘public building’. Directs the department to adopt rules to determine whether a structure is a ‘public building’ subject to this act.

BACKGROUND: According to the Oregon Department of Energy, solar energy systems work well even in western Oregon, which receives as much solar energy as the national average. Solar energy systems include: passive solar space heating; building architecture that emphasizes use of daylight; proper window placement and thermal storage, such as flooring materials that absorb and store radiant heat; solar domestic water heating systems; and solar electric power systems which generate electricity.

House Bill 2620-B requires that public construction and reconstruction projects dedicate at least 1.5 percent of the total contract price for the use of solar energy technology. This applies to projects that exceed 50 percent of the value of the public building and only on projects where state funds are used either directly or indirectly. The measure directs contracting agencies, prior to entering into a public improvement contract, to prepare a written determination of whether the inclusion of solar energy technology on the project is appropriate. If the contracting agency determines that it is inappropriate, then the amount otherwise used for solar technology would be dedicated to a future public building project in addition to the 1.5 percent required by this measure.