

STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY**House Committee On Energy and Environment****Fiscal:** Fiscal impact issued**Revenue:** No Revenue Impact**Action Date:** 05/12/15**Action:** Do Pass As Amended, Be Printed Engrossed, And Bill Be Referred To Ways
And Means.**Meeting Dates:** 04/28, 05/12**Vote:**

Yeas: 9 - Bentz, Boone, Heard, Helm, Holvey, Johnson, Reardon, Vega Pederson, Weidner

Prepared By: Beth Patrino, Committee Administrator

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Directs Public Utility Commission (PUC) to form work group to study methods by which natural gas public utility may expand service to areas that do not currently have access to natural gas. Directs PUC to include in work group representatives of public utilities that furnish natural gas, other energy suppliers, local governments, and elected officials; stakeholders who have interest in study outcome; and individuals with subject matter knowledge. Requires PUC to report study results to interim committee of Legislative Assembly related to energy by September 15, 2016. Sunsets on January 2, 2017. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Interest in extension of natural gas service
- Work group membership

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:

Modifies work group membership to include representatives of public utilities that furnish natural gas, other energy suppliers, local governments, and elected officials; stakeholders who have interest in study outcome; and individuals with subject matter knowledge.

BACKGROUND:

Energy is often a key ingredient in a decision to locate or expand a business in a community. A number of smaller communities in Oregon do not have natural gas service or, if they have service, the site where a business wants to build is located a considerable distance from existing infrastructure. Some communities without natural gas service have asked that service be extended to their communities. There is a considerable cost involved and, as a result, very few new communities have received service.

Senate Bill 32A would direct the Public Utility Commission to form a work group to explore ways of extending natural gas service.