

SCR 1 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Energy and Environment

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Meeting Dates: 4/18

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Declares legislative support for the development of environmentally appropriate closed-loop pump storage projects, encourages Oregon regulators to support closed-loop pump storage, and encourages Oregon utilities to use closed-loop pump storage in their energy resource mixes to meet future energy needs.

REVENUE: No revenue impact

FISCAL: No fiscal impact

Senate vote (3/14/19): Carried by Dembrow. Adopted. Ayes, 27; Nays, 3--Baertschiger Jr, Boquist, Linthicum.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

According to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (Commission), pump storage projects store energy and generate electricity by moving water between two reservoirs at different elevations. When the demand for electricity is low, excess electric generation capacity is used to pump water from the lower to the upper reservoir. Conversely, when the demand for electricity is high, water is released from the upper to the lower reservoir through a turbine to generate electricity. To date, the Commission has authorized a total of 24 pump storage projects currently in operation, with a total installed capacity of over 16,500 megawatts. Additionally, there are two classifications of pump storage projects, closed-loop and open-loop. Closed-loop pump storage projects are projects that are not continuously connected to naturally flowing water, whereas open-loop pump storage projects refer to projects that are continuously connected to naturally flowing water.

Senate Concurrent Resolution 1 A would support the development and utilization of closed-loop pump storage projects by Oregon utilities as a possible energy resource to meet future energy needs.