

SB 443 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Energy and Environment

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Meeting Dates: 2/28

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Requires electric companies to reimburse qualified customers up to \$250 for purchase price of backup power source when power shutoff is likely to occur and power shutoff will likely last for at least eight hours. Requires customer to demonstrate reliance on medically necessary device that uses power or onsite water pump as primary water source, and household income at or below 200 percent of federal poverty guidelines to qualify for reimbursement. Authorizes electric company to make disbursement directly to customers or through nongovernmental entity that administers public purpose charge moneys. Requires PUC to prescribe the application form and to adopt rules for implementation of Act.

- *REVENUE: May have revenue impact, but no statement yet issued*
- *FISCAL: May have fiscal impact, but no statement yet issued*

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Power outages can occur as a result of damage to infrastructure like power lines and power poles or there may be times that an electric utility performs a public safety power shutoff (PSPS) in advance of extreme weather conditions. PSPS are intended to reduce risk in high-fire risk areas by proactively shutting off electricity during extreme and dangerous weather conditions that might cause the electricity system to spark wildfires.

Individuals with a medical condition that requires power can contact their service provider in advance of an outage to register for a medical certificate. According to the Public Utility Commission the utilities work to contact vulnerable customers, including those with medical certificates, in the event of an outage or PSPS.

Senate Bill 443 would require electric companies to reimburse qualified customers up to \$250 for the purchase price of backup power source when power shutoff is likely to occur and power shutoff will likely last for eight or more hours. The Act would require customers to demonstrate reliance on medically necessary device that uses power or onsite water pump as primary water source, and household income at or below 200 percent of federal poverty guidelines to qualify for reimbursement.