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SUSAN CLARKE SCHAAR
CLERK OF THE SENATE
POST OFFICE BOX 396
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA 23218

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

SENATE

March 13, 2014

Conrad T. Spangler, III, Director
Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy
1100 Bank Street, 8th Floor
Richmond, VA 23219

Dear Mr. Spangler:

This is to inform you that, pursuant to Rule 20 (o) of the Rules of the Senate of Virginia, the Senate Committee on Rules has referred the subject matter contained in SR 47 to the Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy Department of the Environmental Quality for study. It is requested that the appropriate committee chair and bill patron receive a written report, with a copy to this office, by November 1, 2014.

With kind regards, I am

Sincerely yours,

Susan Clarke Schaar

SCS:dhl

cc: Sen. John S. Edwards, Chair, Senate Committee on Rules and Patron of SR 47
David K. Paylor, Director, Department of Environmental Quality
Cheryl Jackson, Division of Legislative Services
Brenda Edwards, Division of Legislative Services

history | pdf

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SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 47

Offered March 3, 2014

Requesting the Department of Environmental Quality and the Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy to jointly convene a stakeholder group to study the costs and benefits of distributed solar generation and net metering. Report.

Patrons-- Edwards and Ebbin

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, it is the Commonwealth's codified policy to support research and development of, and promote the use of, renewable energy sources; and

WHEREAS, Virginia's net metering law allows customers of investor-owned and cooperative electric utilities to install solar or small wind power systems on their premises, and to receive full retail credit for any excess electricity their renewable energy systems generate; and

WHEREAS, residential utility customers may install systems up to 20 kilowatts in capacity and nonresidential customers up to 500 kilowatts; and

WHEREAS, enrollment in net metering is open on a first-come, first-served basis until the rated generating capacity owned and operated by customer-generators in the state reaches one percent of each electric distribution company's peak load for the previous year; and

WHEREAS, solar electric generating facility prices continue to fall, prompting increased interest by a number of Virginia's residential, commercial, and local government customers in net energy metering; and

WHEREAS, tangible data is needed in order to evaluate accurately the costs and benefits associated with distributed solar generation and net energy metering; and

WHEREAS, the mission of the Department of Environmental Quality is to protect and enhance Virginia's environment and promote the health of the citizens of the Commonwealth, and in 2009, the General Assembly directed the Department of Environmental Quality to develop a permit-by-rule regulatory program for small renewable energy projects; and

WHEREAS, the primary goal of the Energy Division of the Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy is to advance sustainable energy practices and behaviors; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, That the Department of Environmental Quality and the Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy be requested to jointly convene a stakeholder group to study the costs and benefits of distributed solar generation and net metering. The stakeholder group shall include representatives from public utilities, the solar industry, local governments, environmental advocacy groups, and academic institutions. The Director of the Department of Environmental Quality and the Director of the Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy, or their designees, shall serve as co-chairmen of the stakeholder group.

In conducting its study, the stakeholder group shall examine data relevant to determining the costs and benefits of interconnected distributed solar generation, recommend a method for evaluating such data, and consider other issues as it may deem appropriate.

Technical assistance shall be provided by the State Corporation Commission. All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the stakeholder group for this study, upon request.

The stakeholder group shall complete its meetings for the first year by November 30, 2014, and for the second year by November 30, 2015, and the Directors of the Department of Environmental Quality and the Department of

Mines, Minerals and Energy shall jointly submit to the Governor and the General Assembly an executive summary and report of its findings and recommendations for publication as a Senate document for each year. The executive summaries and reports shall be submitted as provided in the procedures of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents and reports no later than the first day of the next Regular Session of the General Assembly and shall be posted on the General Assembly's website.