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**HOUSE BILL 1527**

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**State of Washington**

**67th Legislature**

**2021 Regular Session**

**By** Representatives Mosbrucker and Dye

1 AN ACT Relating to addressing the extent to which Washington  
2 residents are at risk of rolling blackouts and inadequacy events like  
3 those experienced in California in 2020; amending RCW 19.280.065;  
4 creating a new section; and providing an expiration date.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that California  
7 experienced decreased reliability and rolling blackouts in the summer  
8 of 2020 due to heat events, inadequate dispatchable generating  
9 resources, and other factors. Several studies have shown that the  
10 Northwest will experience a large energy capacity shortfall by 2030.

11 The legislature finds that the electric grid is undergoing  
12 profound changes. The grid is changing from one built to deliver to  
13 the customer electricity from centralized electric generation plants  
14 to one with intermittent energy resources like windmills and solar  
15 panels dispersed geographically across a broad landscape. The  
16 generating resources on the old grid could be turned up or down, on  
17 or off as required. The new grid cannot, without extensive energy  
18 storage, be turned up or down in response to customer demand.

19 The transmission and distribution infrastructure, the sticks and  
20 wires of the grid, are being asked to meet increasingly complex  
21 service requirements and loads. The changing demand includes, but is

1 not limited to, vehicle charging, serving other specialized  
2 technology that requires high power quality, electrification of  
3 natural gas utility services, electricity deployed on the customer  
4 side of the meter through net metering, community solar programs, and  
5 the growth of demand response programs.

6 Further, the clean energy transformation act requires that  
7 utilities making investments in new resources after May of 2019, rely  
8 on renewable resources and energy storage to the maximum extent  
9 feasible, while transitioning away from dispatchable coals and  
10 natural gas fired generation. Current law provides no policy guidance  
11 or value propositions for replacing thermal generation like coal and  
12 natural gas fired plants with storage resources that can store and  
13 redispatch renewable energy. The region needs to maintain and  
14 increase firm dispatchable capacity and related ancillary services to  
15 address the energy adequacy challenges created by a deeply  
16 decarbonized grid.

17 **Sec. 2.** RCW 19.280.065 and 2020 c 63 s 2 are each amended to  
18 read as follows:

19 (1) At least once every twelve months, the department and the  
20 commission shall jointly convene a meeting of representatives of the  
21 investor-owned utilities and consumer-owned utilities, regional  
22 planning organizations, transmission operators, and other  
23 stakeholders to discuss the current, short-term, and long-term  
24 adequacy of energy resources to serve the state's electric needs, and  
25 address specific steps the utilities can take to coordinate planning  
26 in light of the significant changes to the Northwest's power system  
27 including, but not limited to, technological developments,  
28 retirements of legacy baseload power generation resources, and  
29 changes in laws and regulations affecting power supply options. The  
30 department and commission shall provide a summary of these meetings,  
31 including any specific action items, to the governor and legislature  
32 within sixty days of the meeting.

33 (2) In 2021, the meeting convened by the department and the  
34 commission pursuant to subsection (1) of this section must  
35 specifically address the extent to which Washington residents are at  
36 risk of rolling blackouts and inadequacy events like those  
37 experienced in California in 2020. Stakeholders must be surveyed for  
38 recommendations on policy options to prevent California-style  
39 blackouts. The meeting must also focus discussion on the extent to

1 which proposed laws and regulations seeking an aggressive timeline  
2 for building electrification and transportation system  
3 electrification may require new state policy for resource adequacy.  
4 The stakeholder meeting should seek to identify regulatory and  
5 statutory incentives to enhance and ensure resource adequacy and  
6 reliability as the clean energy transition evolves.

7 (3) This section expires January 1, ((2025)) 2030.

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