



Energy

2019 Session Position

A reliable, sustainable and affordable energy supply is vital to the continued economic growth and strength of Washington. The East King County Chambers of Commerce Legislative Coalition strongly supports transition to a clean energy future. As our largest, private investor-owned utility seeks to reduce coal-based power generation as a component of its own portfolio, we support changes to public policy which permit full cost-recovery, encourage investment in renewable energy sources, and recognize the current limitations and opportunities in new technologies. We affirm that both reliability and affordability should be primary drivers in this policy discussion.

Utilities continue to face a transformational change in their industry, responding to evolving customer expectations and rapidly changing technological advancements. Policy makers need to ensure plans are in place, to enable utilities to be nimble in a rapidly changing market place. Utilities must be responsive to market changes, as well as customer desire for real-time adoption of emerging technologies that allow for greater control over energy choices, cleaner and greener power – all while maintaining an affordable low cost. Policies encouraging the use of performance and incentive-based regulation, along with appropriate glide paths and compliance tools that will to aide in the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions on the electric grid, must be advanced to allow for the transformational changes in the utility sector.

At the local level, we support Puget Sound Energy's Energize Eastside project to upgrade the Eastside's aging power infrastructure (16 miles of 50-year-old transmission lines) with higher capacity lines to continue to provide reliable power, as required by Federal mandate for our region.

The East King County Chambers of Commerce Legislative Coalition requests the Legislature to do the following on our behalf:

- Facilitate utilities' ability to comply with the requirements of the Energy Independence Act (I-937). Clarify obligations, ease reporting and facilitate acquisition of all cost-effective conservation resources. Ensure the economic development and environmental benefits of the Initiative are balanced with appropriate cost caps to protect electric utility ratepayers.
- Encourage development of a diverse portfolio of cost-effective energy resources including but not limited to hydroelectric, geothermal, solar, wind, biomass, fuel cells, and tidal/wave power for electric and thermal generation. This includes energy storage technologies and smart grid investments for the transmission and distribution infrastructure necessary to deliver energy resources to Washington's load centers.
- Recognize and support land-use planning requirements in a manner that will continue to protect the environment and ensure the reliability of energy services, including the necessity to upgrade existing and add new energy infrastructure and equipment to meet energy needs of businesses and residents. Allow cities to protect vital infrastructure information for security purposes.