



Search: Site Web



- Home | Metro | Entertainment | Sports | Business | Life | Opinion | AP | Blogs | Interactives | Subscriber Services | Contact Us

- Del.icio.us | Digg | Print Article | E-Mail Article | Change Font Size

Alternative-energy bill heads to Ritter

By HANK LACEY THE GAZETTE
March 3, 2007 - 2:01AM



DENVER - A key component of Gov. Bill Ritter's renewable-energy agenda moved closer to approval Friday, with the House voting to ease obstacles to building transmission lines needed to bring wind and solar power to market.

SB100 passed by voice vote on second reading. It already has passed the Senate and will head to Ritter's desk, if it's approved on final reading by the House.

"This proposal invests in Colorado's infrastructure by connecting local communities to the grid to meet our energy needs for the future," said Rep. Liane "Buffie" McFadyen, D-Pueblo West.

"It is a critical piece of the puzzle to implement our renewable-energy agenda."

The bill allows investor-owned utilities such as Xcel and Aquila to recover the costs incurred in building transmission lines as construction proceeds instead of waiting until the project is done.

That will result in gradual rate increases to pay for infrastructure improvements instead of suddenly larger electricity bills when the public utilities commission approves cost recovery at the end of a project. "Ratepayer shock" will be avoided, McFadyen said.

The state will also be given authority to designate energy resource zones, which will help utilities determine where transmission capacity is needed.

Jake Meffley, a spokesman for Environment Colorado, said the designation of resource zones is critical if renewable energy is to be brought to consumers, because they will help determine where to build transmission lines and locate generation facilities.

"That's the fundamental Catch-22 of renewable-energy development," Meffley said. "You've got great resources, but they're not usually in the populated areas where you've got transmission capacity."

Legislators from the Pikes Peak region supported the measure, which does not affect cityowned Colorado Springs Utilities.

"If we're going to produce any forms of energy, renewable or otherwise, transmission is very important," Rep. Victor Mitchell, R-Castle Rock, said. "If we can't transport energy, then it doesn't do a lot of good to produce it. Anything we can do to produce more energy is a good thing."

In another energy-related development, the Senate gave final approval to a bill that will require Colorado to adopt requirements for energy-conservation standards for new renovated buildings.

SB51 says the state architect must designate an energy-efficiency certification program that will guide construction on those projects.

Two principal sets of energy-conservation standards are in use in the U.S.

The Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building Rating System has been used in more than 5,000 buildings nationwide, according to the U.S. Green Building Council, while the Green Building Initiative's Green Globes system is a newer program that has not yet achieved as high a degree of market presence.

Melanie Smith, public policy director for Alliance for Sustainable Colorado, which has lobbied in support of the bill, said she thinks it was wise that the bill avoided designating one program or the other but that the LEED program is likely to be applied to new buildings.

"It has to consider the reduction in energy and water use, it has to be quantifiable and measurable, it has to consider air quality," Smith said. "Currently, there's only one that guarantees these standards. That's LEED."

Majority Leader Ken Gordon, D-Denver and the bill's sponsor, said legislators are concerned that the costs of complying with the certification requirements be recoverable in a reasonable amount of time.

"Any upfront costs required by the program have to be recovered within 15 years by lower energy and water costs," Gordon said.

Current Weather
60°F
Partly Cloudy
5 day Forecast

Today's Edition
LOGIN | SUBSCRIBE
MORE INFO | ARCHIVES

Subscribe to the Gazette
Get the Gazette for only \$6.40 a month!
[Click Here to Subscribe](#)

Candid Answers about LASIK

[Click here to receive your FREE DVD!](#)

Buckley Vision Institute

- Watch a live LASIK Procedure
- Learn about Dr. Buckley's Advanced Technology
- Walk through a Personal Consultation and Exam
- View real LASIK Patients telling their stories

TAG CLOUD

What is this?

energy bill blog

transmission find renewable produce building pay program contact guide green costs utilities ritter life denver lot water cost standards solar vote heads buildings house lines leed service policy

- | Helpful Links | Interactive Features |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City's traffic cams • Police blotter • COSMIX updates • Your Dime: Citizens' Toolbox • Look Out: Calendar • Online Visitors Guide • Local military links | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newsroom blog • Lottery results • Local Yellow Pages • Email newsletters • RSS feeds • Pikes Peak Bicentennial |

- | Most Popular | Highest Rated |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sun today, snow tonight • Pikes Peak runners back to the starting line • Stormwater department flooded with calls • 5-part, 7-hour GED test not an easy alternative • Storm-water office swamped • Moseying on • Sparks fly over charter bill • VIVA WAL-MART • Letters - Tuesday • Newscasts flock to 9 p.m. slot | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gazette.com - Bars rebel against smoking ban • Gazette.com - Concealed-gun permits highest in state • Gazette.com - No stranger to pain • Gazette.com - Barking dog isn't music to everyone's ears |

NEW HOMES
Colorado Springs

Search Thousands of Colorado Springs Homes!

Take a tour of Colorado Springs!

Meet our Experienced Team!

Up to \$40,000 in Builder Incentives!

HERITAGE REALTY

Ads by Google

Ocean Energy Converter
New invention that will change
WWW.SWELLFUEL.COM

Classifieds

The bill now heads to the House of Representatives.
CONTACT THE WRITER: hank.lacey@gazette.com or (303) 837-0697.

Ads by Google

New Homes from Mid \$200s
Lovely homes in Tumwater, close toOlympia & shopping. Register Now!
www.quadralthomes.com

Quest Components, Inc.
Power One In Stock - Great PricingOnline search and purchase
www.questcomp.com

Click to vote

Recommend this story? Yes No

The online vote:

Ads by Google

<p>Solar Power It's easier than you think! We'll help you find what's best for you. www.groSolar.com</p>	<p>New Homes From Mid \$200s Don't spend your money on house repairs - you can buy a new home! www.quadralthomes.com</p>	<p>Ocean Energy Converter New invention that will change the way we get energy. WWW.SWELLFUEL.COM</p>
---	---	--

[Classifieds](#)
 [Find a Home](#)
 [Find a Job](#)
 [Find a Car](#)
 [ColoradoSprings.com](#)
 [Movie Guide](#)
 [Contact Us](#)
 [Webmaster](#)
 [Terms of Service](#)
 [Local Business Listings](#)

[XML](#)
[What is XML/RSS?](#)
[Privacy Policy](#)
[About Us](#)

Copyright © 2007, The Gazette, a division of Freedom Colorado Information. All rights reserved.