
**SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY, UTILITIES AND
COMMUNICATIONS**

**Senator Benjamin Allen, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular**

Bill No: SB 1158 **Hearing Date:** 4/13/2026
Author: Stern
Version: 2/18/2026 Introduced
Urgency: No **Fiscal:** Yes
Consultant: Nidia Bautista

SUBJECT: Energy: reliability planning assessment

DIGEST: This bill requires specified information to be included in a required quarterly energy reliability report.

ANALYSIS:

Existing law:

- 1) Requires the State Energy Resources Conservation and Development Commission (California Energy Commission (CEC)) and the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC), on or before December 15, 2022, and quarterly thereafter, to submit to the Legislature a joint Reliability Planning Assessment that, among other things, includes prospective information on existing and expected resources, including updates on the interconnection status for renewable projects and any delays in interconnection, and expected retirements for both system and local resources. (Public Resources Code §25233 (a))
- 2) Requires the CEC to report in the energy almanac on California energy resources that serve load in California. (Public Resources Code §25233(b))

This bill:

- 1) Requires the Joint Reliability Planning Assessment to include:
 - a) the status of utility transmission upgrades and electrical grid infrastructure capacity,
 - b) CPUC approvals of applications for certificates of public convenience and necessity and permits to construct utility and independent projects, and
 - c) applications for permits for projects from the CEC and the queue of projects from the California Independent System Operator (CAISO), include the expected completion dates for both system and local resources.

- 2) Requires the Joint Reliability Planning Assessment to report on the use of fossil fuel by certain facilities constructed by, purchased by, or under contract with, the Department of Water Resources (DWR), as specified.

Background

SB 846 (Dodd, Chapter 239, Statutes of 2022). As part of authorizing a five-year extension of the operation of Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant (DCPP), SB 846 mandated the CEC and CPUC to develop and provide to the Legislature quarterly Joint Agency Reliability Planning Assessments beginning on December 15, 2022. The assessments are required to provide specified information about forecasted energy supply and demand, the timing of new load and resources within the balancing authority of the CAISO and its transmission access charge areas. Additionally, the assessment is required to include information about imports, the interconnection status for renewable projects, and expected retirements for system and local resources. The assessment must also provide recommendations to the Legislature on actions needed to resolve any delays or barriers to connecting new resources. The most recent Joint Reliability Planning Assessment, the fourth quarterly report, was issued on January 20th earlier this year. It's been common the assessments have been delayed by months from their anticipated issuance.

Electricity Supply Strategic Reliability Reserve Program (ESSRRP) at the DWR (funded at \$2.3 billion). In June 2022, Budget Trailer Bills, AB 205 (Committee on Budget, Chapter 61, Statutes of 2022), AB 178 (Ting, Chapter 45, Statutes of 2022), and AB 180 (Ting, Chapter 44, Statutes of 2022), were signed into law. These three pieces of legislation collectively established the ESSRRP and set forth new responsibilities and activities by DWR, funded by the newly established Electricity Supply Strategic Reliability Reserve Fund (ESSRRF), and separate from the State Water Project. DWR acts as an electric grid reliability backstop for the state of California by procuring and providing incremental power during extreme events. Under the ESSRRP, DWR acts as contingency insurance to help maintain electricity reliability. As part of the program, DWR contracts directly with power facilities and also enters into agreements with the state's large electric investor-owned utilities (IOUs) to reimburse for the value of imported firm energy resources to support summer reliability.

Comments

Need for this bill. According to the author:

Our grid is under stress, especially as the impacts of climate change hit sooner than expected. And while California is strongly committed to accelerating clean

energy deployment, it has yet to tackle plans for achieving a truly zero carbon, reliable electricity grid. In fact, in just the past few months several of our state agencies responsible for grid reliability have opted for extending the life of once through cooled power plants to address emergency energy demand, and increasing natural gas storage at the Aliso Canyon Natural Gas storage facility. In order for the state to meet its clean energy and reliability goals, it needs to add more transparency and better energy forecasting and planning. Tracking the progress and impediments to meeting our state energy goals should not be buried in multiple links and online reports but accessible through a user friendly dashboard charter both progress and shortcomings in order for both state and public/private partners to find the best solutions to improve our grid reliance and decarbonization.

This bill requires additional information in the assessment, including: the status of transmission upgrades and electrical grid infrastructure capacity, CPUC approvals of applications for utility certificates of public convenience and necessity and permits to construct utility and independent projects, the status of projects at the CEC and the queue of projects from the CAISO. This bill also requires reporting on the use of fossil fuel by facilities constructed, purchased, or under contract with the DWR as part of the ESSRRP. This information is currently reported in DWR's program report on the ESSRRP. The author's desire to include additional information in the quarterly Joint Reliability Planning Assessment seems reasonable. However, as this bill moves forward the author may wish to consider whether the added detail of some of the information could further delay future delivery of the quarterly reports.

Prior/Related Legislation

SB 846 (Dodd, Chapter 239, Statutes of 2022) authorized a five-year extension of the operations of the DCP, among other provisions includes a requirement for a quarterly Joint Reliability Planning Assessment.

FISCAL EFFECT: Appropriation: No Fiscal Com.: Yes Local: No

SUPPORT:

Tri-County Chamber Alliance

OPPOSITION:

None received

ARGUMENTS IN SUPPORT: According to the Tri-County Chamber Alliance representing the counties of San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara and Ventura, states:

Energy reliability is fundamental to business continuity. Power outages and grid instability cost businesses in our region millions of dollars in lost productivity, equipment damage, and supply chain disruptions. As California accelerates its clean energy transition, robust reliability planning is essential to ensure businesses are not left without the power they need to operate and grow. TCCA [Tri-County Chamber Alliance] supports SB 1158 because it prioritizes grid reliability, supports business continuity, and ensures energy planning keeps pace with the demands of a growing electrifying economy.

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