CONCURRENCE IN SENATE AMENDMENTS
AB 1715 (Schiavo)
As Amended August 20, 2026
Majority vote

SUMMARY

This bill establishes mandatory reporting and accountability requirements for electric and gas utilities regarding their use of taxpayer funding including grants, loans, and bonds from federal and state entities. The bill requires the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) to ensure any savings are delivered to customers and requires the CPUC to impose penalties on electric and gas utilities for failing to comply with the required reporting.

Senate Amendments

1) Removed the bill's requirement for the CPUC to establish a searchable database of public utility advice letters.

2) Removed the bill's requirement of a utility, if determined by the CPUC, to provide a link to an advice letter associated with any rate change.

3) Removed reference to prior reporting requirement (Resolution E-254) and made minor clarifying changes to compliance requirements.

COMMENTS

There were historic levels of federal spending on clean energy infrastructure during the Biden Administration, including more than $62 billion to the Department of Energy through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). A significant amount of this funding has been awarded to California's investor-owned utilities (IOUs). The goal of that funding was to advance the state's clean energy and climate goals while minimizing the burden to ratepayers.

This bill seeks to ensure that these taxpayer funds are used appropriately and that ratepayer funds complement, not duplicate, efforts by requiring regular and transparent disclosure of funding activities. The disclosure requirements in this measure largely mirror the reporting called for by the CPUC in Resolution E-5254, adopted in April 2023. The CPUC Resolution is mostly focused on specific federal programs (IIJA, Inflation Reduction Act, and Creating Helpful Incentives to Produce Semiconductors and Science Act), whereas this encompasses a broader range of potential taxpayer funding sources, including state-allocated funds. While the status of much of this federal funding remains uncertain, the bill seeks to increase transparency for ratepayers by creating more consistent and formalized reporting from utilities on for taxpayer funding awards. Moreover, this bill requires the CPUC to provide an annual report to the Legislature summarizing taxpayer-funded activities and associated ratepayer benefits.

According to the Author

According to the author, "Californians are suffering under high electricity rates that are only expected to grow in the coming years to pay for wildfire safety measures and needed grid infrastructure and resiliency projects. Alternative financing structures, such as the $15 billion Department of Energy loan to Pacific Gas and Electric, are key strategies to reducing the growth of customer energy bills. Lower financing costs projected from taxpayer funded loans or grants are savings that should be passed on to ratepayers. Assembly Bill 1715 will ensure frequent and transparent reporting on the use of public funds by investor-owned utilities, so Californians can be confident their dollars are going towards lowering their energy bills."

Arguments in Support
As the sponsor of this bill, The Utility Reform Network (TURN) writes that the requirements regarding alternative financing and taxpayer funding "to prevent IOUs from double dipping into ratepayer and other funding sources…are lacking" and therefore, this bill ensures "the savings provided by public financing is used to benefit ratepayers, not further enrich shareholders."

Arguments in Opposition
The California Coalition of Utility Employees writes that the requirements of this bill are "totally unrealistic" as IOUs could face "substantial penalties simply for failing to report a nontraditional funding source (that an IOU may not have secured or ever will!)" and requires IOUs "to 'promptly deliver' the financial benefits of nontraditional funding to ratepayers."

FISCAL COMMENTS

According to the Senate Committee on Appropriations, the fiscal impact of this bill is unknown, but will likely result in significant ongoing costs, potentially in the hundreds of thousands of dollars annually for the CPUC to ensure compliance with the bill's requirements.

VOTES:

ASM UTILITIES AND ENERGY: 16-0-2
YES: Petrie-Norris, Patterson, Boerner, Calderon, Davies, Mark González, Harabedian, Hart, Kalra, Papan, Rogers, Schiavo, Schultz, Ta, Wallis, Zbur
ABS, ABST OR NV: Chen, Irwin

ASM APPROPRIATIONS: 13-2-0
YES: Wicks, Hoover, Aguiar-Curry, Calderon, Caloza, Fong, Mark González, Krell, Pacheco, Pellerin, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Ta
NO: Dixon, Tangipa

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 67-8-5
YES: Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alanis, Alvarez, Arambula, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Berman, Boerner, Bonta, Bryan, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Castillo, Connolly, Davies, Elhawary, Fong, Gabriel, Gallagher, Garcia, Gipson, Jeff Gonzalez, Mark González, Haney, Harabedian, Hart, Hoover, Irwin, Jackson, Kalra, Krell, Lee, Lowenthal, McKinnor, Nguyen, Ortega, Pacheco, Papan, Patel, Patterson, Pellerin, Petrie-Norris, Quirk-Silva, Ramos, Ransom, Michelle Rodriguez, Rogers, Blanca Rubio, Schiavo, Schultz, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Soria, Stefani, Ta, Valencia, Wallis, Ward, Wicks, Wilson, Zbur, Rivas
NO: DeMaio, Dixon, Flora, Hadwick, Johnson, Macedo, Sanchez, Tangipa
ABS, ABST OR NV: Chen, Ellis, Lackey, Muratsuchi, Celeste Rodriguez

UPDATED

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