Date of Hearing: May 6, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
Buffy Wicks, Chair
AB 2476 (Ellis) – As Amended April 27, 2026

Policy Committee: Utilities and Energy Vote: 18 - 0

Urgency: No State Mandated Local Program: No Reimbursable: No

SUMMARY:

This bill modifies existing law so that so that any pumped hydroelectric resource that does not exceed a capacity of 500 megawatts is eligible for procurement by the Department of Water Resources (DWR) through DWR's centralized procurement authority.

FISCAL EFFECT:

Minor state costs if any.

COMMENTS:

In 2023, the Legislature authorized the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) to request DWR to exercise DWR's central procurement function, in existing law, to procure eligible long lead-time energy resources, until January 1, 2035. (See AB 1373 (E. Garcia), Chapter 367, Statutes of 2023.) The law limits DWR's authority to the procurement of only certain resources, including resources from a pump hydroelectric facility if the pump hydroelectric facility does not exceed 500 megawatts and has been directly appropriated funding by the state before January 1, 2023. This limitation, in effect, seems to prohibit DWR from using its central procurement authority to procure electricity resources from any pumped-storage hydro resource.

The author describes this bill as "designed to enhance the state's existing central procurement program by permitting the procurement of pumped-storage hydro…as an eligible zero carbon resource available to the program" and characterizes pumped-storage hydro as "a reliable, cost-effective long-duration, clean energy opportunity that diversifies the state's options." Two entities, energy project developers EDF power solutions North America and Rye Development, each write in support of the bill. Neither developer mentions a specific pumped-storage hydro project, existing or conceptual, that might benefit from the change in law but, undoubtedly, each has a project or projects in mind.

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