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THIRD READING

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Bill No: SB 929  
Author: Jones (R)  
Introduced: 1/29/26  
Vote: 21

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SENATE ENERGY, U. & C. COMMITTEE: 15-0, 4/7/26  
AYES: Allen, Ochoa Bogh, Archuleta, Arreguín, Becker, Caballero, Gonzalez,  
Hurtado, McNerney, Reyes, Richardson, Rubio, Stern, Strickland, Wahab  
NO VOTE RECORDED: Dahle, Grove

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE: Senate Rule 28.8

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**SUBJECT:** State Energy Resources Conservation and Development  
Commission: chair: report to the Legislature

**SOURCE:** Author

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**DIGEST:** This bill requires the chair of the California Energy Commission (CEC) to annually appear before the relevant legislative policy committees to report on specified activities of the CEC.

**ANALYSIS:**

Existing law:

- 1) Establishes the CEC, consisting of five members appointed by the Governor, and specifies the duties of the CEC. Every two years, the Governor must designate a chair and vice chair from the CEC's membership. The CEC must appoint a public adviser every three years to carry out certain public engagement duties. (Public Resources Code §25200 et. seq.)
- 2) Requires the CEC to assess trends in energy consumption and analyze the social, economic, and environmental consequences of these trends. The CEC must establish energy conservation measures, including building and appliance

energy efficiency standards, and recommend additional conservation measures to the Governor and the Legislature. (Public Resources Code §25216)

- 3) Establishes the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC), consisting of five members appointed by the Governor, and authorizes the CPUC to fix rates and establish rules for public utilities. (Article XII of the California Constitution)
- 4) Requires the CPUC to prepare an annual report on its activities and performance and requires the president of the CPUC to appear annually before the appropriate policy committees of the Legislature to present the report. (Public Utilities Code §§910 and 321.6)

This bill:

- 1) Requires the chair of the CEC to appear annually before the relevant policy committees of the Legislature to report on the CEC's responsibilities, including the following activities:
  - a) Research, development, and demonstration.
  - b) Building and appliance efficiency standards.
  - c) Electricity and natural gas demand forecasts.
  - d) Siting of thermal powerplants.
  - e) Implementation of the Renewables Portfolio Standard (RPS) Program and energy labeling.
  - f) Transportation fuels and alternative fuel vehicles.
- 2) Requires the CEC's chair to report on the CEC's activities from the prior year and efforts taken to solicit input from Californians in diverse parts of the states.
- 3) Requires the CEC's chair to report on the successes and challenges encountered in carrying out its responsibilities and outreach efforts.

## **Background**

*More duties, more oversight?* This bill is one of several substantially similar measures passed by this house in recent years aimed at increasing legislative oversight for the CEC. Under existing law, the president of the CPUC must annually appear before the relevant policy committees and submit a report on CPUC activities undertaken in the prior year. This bill would establish a similar

reporting requirement for the Chair of the CEC. The CEC plays a significant role in the state's energy policy and administers multiple programs that impact the duties of other agencies, including the CPUC, the California Air Resources Board and the California Independent System Operator (CAISO). CEC's duties have traditionally included the following activities:

- Analyzing state demand and supply for electricity and natural gas;
- Administering the RPS program;
- Environmental review and certification of proposed large thermal power plants;
- Establishment of building and appliance efficiency standards that promote energy conservation;
- Coordination and development of zero-emission vehicle technology and infrastructure; and
- Managing the largest state-level energy research and development program in the nation.

In addition to these longstanding duties, recent legislation has substantially expanded the CEC's responsibilities related to transportation fuel markets, energy reliability, renewable energy development and siting, and electric vehicle (EV) charger reliability. Specifically, new duties assigned to the CEC in recent legislation include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Administering a streamlined permitting process for certain large-scale renewable energy projects that opt-in for state-level certification.
- Establishing the Strategic Reliability Reserve to fund sources that enable the shifting or reduction of net peak demand during critical reliability events. The CEC administers two programs that receive funding from the Strategic Reliability Fund: the Demand Side Grid Support and Distributed Electricity Backup Assets programs.
- Establishing the Division of Petroleum Market Oversight and collecting and analyzing petroleum refinery data, monitoring fuel pricing trends, overseeing oil refinery turnaround and maintenance periods, and setting minimum transportation fuel inventory levels for refineries.
- Creating a strategic plan for developing offshore wind resources.
- Setting bidirectional charging requirements on EVs sold in the state and establishing reliability standards for EV chargers.

The CEC, CPUC, and CAISO each play a critical role in forecasting, planning, and addressing energy demands. Increasingly, policies adopted by one of these

agencies will impact the activities of the other energy agencies. For example, the CEC's building and appliance energy efficiency standards may influence utility building decarbonization investments overseen by the CPUC. Greater electrical loads resulting from higher electrification may impact the availability of resources through the CAISO. Renewable siting and RPS targets can impact utility procurements overseen by the CPUC. Despite the inter-relatedness of these energy agencies' actions, existing law only currently requires the CPUC to annually report on its efforts and appear before relevant legislative policy committees. This bill would extend similar reporting obligations to the CEC.

### **Related/Prior Legislation**

SB 491 (Laird) of 2025, was substantially similar to this bill. The bill was held in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

SB 610 (Laird) of 2024, was substantially similar to this bill when heard by the Senate Energy Utilities and Communications Committee. The bill was subsequently amended into a different subject matter. The bill was held in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

SB 733 (Hueso) of 2022, as passed by the Senate Energy Utilities and Communications Committee, was substantially similar to this bill. The bill was subsequently amended into a different subject matter. The bill was held in the Assembly Appropriations Committee

SB 708 (Hueso) of 2019, would have required the CAISO to disclose information relating to tariff or rule of conduct violations by market participants or scheduling coordinators and established other transparency requirements. The bill also would have required the CAISO's Chief Executive Officer to appear annually before the relevant policy committees of the Legislature to report on the CAISO's operations and state of the grid. The bill died in the Assembly.

SB 497 (Bradford) of 2019, was substantially similar to this bill and would have required the CEC to appear annually before the appropriate policy committees of the Legislature to report on specified activities. The bill died in the Assembly.

SB 376 (Bradford) of 2017, was substantially similar to this bill and would have required the CEC to appear annually before the appropriate policy committees of the Legislature to report on specified activities. The bill died in the Assembly.

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

**SUPPORT:** (Verified 4/27/26)

None received

**OPPOSITION:** (Verified 4/27/26)

None received

**ARGUMENTS IN SUPPORT:** According to the author:

The authority and responsibility of the California Energy Commission have expanded significantly, yet its oversight by the Legislature has not appropriately kept up with that growth. The Commission has adopted and is considering policies with substantial cost implications for Californians along with its implementation of impactful policies enacted by the Legislature. These actions have direct impacts on housing affordability, energy costs, and the overall cost of living in California.

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4/28/26 16:33:32

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