WEST VIRGINIA CODE: §5b-2F-2

§5B-2F-2. Purpose; Office of Energy; Development of Comprehensive Energy Policy.

(a) West Virginia and the nation are in need of energy that is reliable, efficient, affordable and locally produced. To meet this need, the Office of Energy shall develop a long-lasting energy solution that embraces all forms of energy including, without limitation, coal, natural gas, nuclear energy, hydropower, hydrogen, and geothermal energy, by developing a comprehensive energy policy that emphasizes:

(1) Increased reliability from stable baseload generation;

(2) Increased efficiency through innovation;

(3) Low-cost energy as the bedrock of economic development; and

(4) Energy independence and security through increased domestic production.

(b) The Office of Energy shall develop an energy policy and shall report the same back to the Governor and the Joint Committee on Government and Finance before December 1, 2026. The energy policy shall set forth the state's energy policies through at least 2050 and shall provide a direction for the private sector. The Office may amend this policy at any time to reflect changes in energy opportunities. Prior to the expiration of the energy policy, the Office of Energy shall begin review of the policy and submit a revised energy policy to the Governor and the Joint Committee on Government and Finance six months before the expiration of the policy.

(c) The Comprehensive Energy Policy developed by the Office of Energy and submitted to the Governor and the Joint Committee on Government and Finance shall provide recommendations that at a minimum:

(1) Prioritize baseload generation over intermittent generation;

(2) Allow the state's existing coal-fired power plants to remain fully operational through at least 2050;

(3) Develop a strategy for developing baseload electricity generating projects throughout the state, including, but not limited to, coal, natural gas, nuclear, hydropower, and hydrogen, geothermal;

(4) Set a goal of;

(A) Increasing the state's current baseload generating capacity from 16 gigawatts to at least 50 gigawatts by 2050; and

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(B) Making West Virginia the leading per-capita generator, situs of commercial and industrial users, and exporter of electricity in the nation by 2050;

(5) Expand the international market for West Virginia coal and develop economical uses for West Virginia coal in addition to its use in electricity generation and steel manufacturing;

(6) Create a robust in-state market for natural gas through increased manufacturing and electricity generation;

(7) Address the need for sufficient electricity transmission lines and natural gas pipelines to support the increase in baseload electricity generation; and

(8) Suggest the placement of natural gas pipelines and electricity transmission lines in locations throughout the state that lack sufficient access to electricity or natural gas and in locations where access to increased supplies of electricity or natural gas will spur manufacturing or other economic development.

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