

JAY INSLEE  
Governor



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March 25, 2022

To the Honorable Speaker and Members,  
The House of Representatives of the State of Washington

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am returning herewith, without my approval as to Sections 19, 20, 21, and 22, Engrossed Second Substitute House Bill No. 1812 entitled:

“AN ACT Relating to modernizing the energy facility site evaluation council to meet the state's clean energy goals.”

Section 19 of Engrossed Second Substitute House Bill 1812 directs the Department of Commerce to conduct a study and stakeholder engagement around rural energy issues; however, the Legislature did not provide funding for this work. Fortunately, there is important study and stakeholder engagement work directed by the Legislature that is underway now, including a stakeholder process looking at how to effectively and responsibly site low-carbon energy. Recommendations from these efforts are due by the end of the year. In addition, the WSU Energy Program is launching a study and stakeholder process for how to site solar energy generation with the least conflicts.

There are significant economic development and job opportunities in clean energy in rural Washington and throughout the state. On our shared path to clean energy and a safe climate, I am committed to learning from and having dialogue with rural communities across the state about clean energy, including project siting, and about how we can support vibrant rural communities as we transition to a clean energy economy. Doing this well will require deep engagement with rural communities. Therefore, I am directing the Department of Commerce to bring forward a proposal for funding in the 2023-25 biennium to conduct a study and stakeholder engagement process for key issues around clean energy and rural communities.

In addition, Sections 20, 21, and 22 amend statutes of an existing joint legislative committee and give it a new charge related to examining energy facility siting. That new charge is intended to be informed by the results of the Department of Commerce study in Section 19. Because that study was not funded, the committee would lack a key information source for their work.

For these reasons I have vetoed Sections 19, 20, 21, and 22 of Engrossed Second Substitute House Bill No. 1812.

With the exception of Sections 19, 20, 21, and 22, Engrossed Second Substitute House Bill No. 1812 is approved.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jay Inslee", is written over a light gray rectangular background.

Jay Inslee  
Governor