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S.220

Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General

Affairs moves that the bill be amended by striking out Sec. 8 in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new Sec. 8 to read as follows:

* * * Energy Rates for Businesses * * *

Sec. 8. PUBLIC SERVICE BOARD STUDY; BUSINESS RATES

(a) On or before December 1, 2014, the Public Service Board shall conduct and complete an investigation of how best to advance the public good through improved competitiveness for Vermont’s energy-intensive businesses with regard to energy costs. As used in this section, “energy-intensive business” or “business” means a manufacturer; a business that uses more than 1,000 MWh of electricity or more than 50,000 million BTU of combustible fuel per year; or a business that meets another energy threshold deemed more appropriate by the Board.

(b) In conducting the investigation required by this section, the Board shall consider:

(1) potential changes to the method used to assess rates for businesses and, if such changes serve the public good, how to implement them in the rate design of Vermont utilities;

1 (2) potential changes to the delivery, funding, and financing of energy
2 efficiency services to businesses, including an opt-out provision for businesses
3 with regard to the energy efficiency charge established under 30 V.S.A. § 209;

4 (3) the history and outcome of any evaluations of the Energy Savings
5 Account or Customer Credit programs, as well as best practices for customer
6 self-directed energy efficiency programs;

7 (4) programs or policies that would authorize retail choice for
8 businesses with respect to contracts for electricity supply;

9 (5) any other programs or policies the Board deems relevant; and

10 (6) whether and to what extent any programs or policies considered by
11 the Board under this section would impose cost shifts onto other customers,
12 result in stranded costs (costs that cannot be recovered by a regulated firm
13 during the transition from traditional regulation to an open, competitive
14 environment), or conflict with mandatory renewable energy requirements in
15 Vermont and whether such cost shifts, stranded costs, or conflicts would
16 nonetheless promote the public good.

17 (c) On or before January 15, 2015, the Board shall report to the General
18 Assembly its findings and recommendations regarding regulatory or statutory
19 changes that would reduce energy costs for Vermont businesses and promote
20 the public good.

1 (d) The investigation required by this section need not conform with the
2 contested case procedures of 3 V.S.A. chapter 25 but shall provide the public,
3 including affected parties and State agencies, notice and opportunity for
4 written and oral comments.