



AB 37: Smart Grid Deployment: Smart Meters

SUMMARY OF THE BILL

The federal Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 states that it is the policy of the United States to maintain a reliable and secure electricity structure that achieves certain objectives that characterize a smart grid. Existing federal law requires each state regulatory authority, with respect to each electric utility for which it has ratemaking authority, and each non-regulated electric utility, to consider certain standards and to determine whether or not it is appropriate to implement those standards to carry out the purposes of the federal Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act. Existing law requires the CPUC, by July 1, 2010, and in consultation with the State Energy Resources Conservation and Development Commission, the Independent System Operator, and other key stakeholders, to determine the requirements for a smart grid deployment plan consistent with certain policies set forth in state and federal law. Existing law requires that the smart grid improve overall efficiency, reliability, and cost-effectiveness of electrical system operations, planning, and maintenance.

This bill would require the CPUC, by January 1, 2012, to identify alternative options for customers of electrical corporations that decline the installation of wireless advanced metering infrastructure devices, commonly referred to as smart meters, as part of an approved smart grid deployment plan. The bill would also require the CPUC, when it has identified those alternative options, to require each electrical corporation to permit a customer to decline the installation of an advanced metering infrastructure device and make the alternative options available to that customer. The bill would also require the CPUC to disclose certain information to customers about the technology of smart meters. The bill would require the CPUC to direct each electrical corporation to suspend the deployment of advanced metering infrastructure until the CPUC has complied with the above requirements. Under existing law, a violation of the Public Utilities Act or any order, decision, rule, direction, demand, or requirement of the CPUC is a crime. Because the bill would require action by the CPUC to implement certain of its requirements, a violation of which would be a crime, these provisions would impose a state-mandated local program by creating a new crime.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Watch

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION/IMPACT TO COUNTY

The California Council on Science and Technology is examining the Smart meter issue to determine if current health and safety factors are sufficient. Several County Board of Supervisors and cities have expressed over potential health effects of the Smart Meters and the infrastructure being deployed by California utilities for electricity consumption and pricing.

SUPPORTERS: None on record

OPPOSITION: None on record

COUNTY CONTACT

Terri Nisich, Asst. CEO, County Executive Office (805)568-3404

COUNTY EXECUTIVE OFFICE

105 East Anapamu Street, Suite 406
Santa Barbara, California 93101
805/568-3400 • Fax 805/568-3414

Terri Maus Nisich, Assistant County Executive Officer