

NUCLEAR ENERGY FEASIBILITY STUDY

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House Bill 6019 (proposed substitute H-1)

Sponsor: Rep. Graham Filler

Committee: Energy

Complete to 5-3-22

Analysis available at
<http://www.legislature.mi.gov>

SUMMARY:

House Bill 6019 would add a new section to 1939 PA 3, the enabling act for the Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC), to require the MPSC to engage an outside consulting firm to conduct a feasibility study on nuclear energy generation in Michigan. Not later than 18 months after the bill's effective date, the MPSC would have to deliver a written report on the feasibility study to the governor, the Speaker and minority leader of the House, the Senate majority and minority leaders, and the chairpersons of the House and Senate standing committees with primary responsibility for energy and environmental protection issues.

The feasibility study would have to consider all of the following:

- Advantages and disadvantages of nuclear energy generation in Michigan, including the economic and environmental impact.
- Ways to maximize the use of workers residing, and products made, in Michigan in the construction of nuclear energy generation facilities.
- Evaluations, conclusions, and recommendations on all of the following:
 - Design characteristics.
 - Environmental and ecological impacts.
 - Land and siting, safety, and engineering and cost-related criteria.
 - Small cell nuclear reactor capability.¹
- Socioeconomic assessment and impact analysis, including the following:
 - Workforce education, training, and development.
 - Local and state tax base.
 - Supply chains.
 - Permanent and temporary job creation.
 - Environmental justice.
- The timeline for development, including areas of potential acceleration or efficiencies and leveraging existing nuclear energy generation facilities in Michigan.
- Additional efficiencies and benefits that could be gained by coordinating with other advanced, clean energy technologies, such as hydrogen, direct air capture of carbon dioxide, and energy storage.
- Literature review of studies assessing the potential impact of nuclear energy generation in supporting an energy transition.
- Analysis of national and international studies of cases where development of nuclear energy is supported and adopted.

¹ Roughly speaking, small modular reactors (SMRs) are like miniature nuclear power plants capable of power generation, processing heat, desalination, and other industrial uses but with a smaller physical footprint and reduced capital investment, among other benefits, according to the federal Department of Energy, Office of Nuclear Energy.

- Assessment and recommendation of current and future policies that may be needed to support or accelerate addition of nuclear energy generation or that may improve its cost-effectiveness.
- Stakeholder engagement to seek input or feedback, including current or previous nuclear energy generation facility owners and operators in Michigan.

Proposed MCL 460.10hh

FISCAL IMPACT:

House Bill 6019 would create additional costs for the Michigan Public Service Commission, which operates within the Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs. Engaging an external consulting firm to conduct the study would result in an indeterminate cost for the MPSC. The bill is silent on funding for the study, but an additional appropriation would likely be necessary, as the cost of the study could not be absorbed with existing appropriations.

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■ This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan House Fiscal Agency staff for use by House members in their deliberations and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.