

LEGISLATURE OF NEBRASKA  
ONE HUNDRED FOURTH LEGISLATURE  
FIRST SESSION

**LEGISLATIVE BILL 583**

Introduced by Schilz, 47; Kolowski, 31; Mello, 5; Nordquist, 7; Pansing  
Brooks, 28.

Read first time January 21, 2015

Committee: Natural Resources

- 1 A BILL FOR AN ACT relating to the State Energy Office; to require a state
- 2 energy plan; and to provide powers and duties.
- 3 Be it enacted by the people of the State of Nebraska,

1           Section 1. (1) The Legislature finds that:

2           (a) Comprehensive planning enables the state to address its energy  
3 needs, challenges, and opportunities and to capture the economic benefits  
4 of energy production and technological innovation;

5           (b) Significant improvements in energy efficiency and investments in  
6 new clean and renewable energy resources and technologies may affect  
7 energy costs and efforts should be made to mitigate cost increases and  
8 ensure that Nebraska's electricity rates remain competitive; and

9           (c) Extensive research has been done and is available from the  
10 state's public power entities and it is in the best interest of the state  
11 to utilize the resources, including data, experience, and knowledge, that  
12 the utilities offer to create a comprehensive state energy plan.

13           (2) The State Energy Office shall develop and adopt an integrated  
14 state energy plan on or before December 31, 2015, and review such plan  
15 periodically as the office deems necessary. The office may organize  
16 technical and working committees of individuals representing public and  
17 nonpublic entities with expertise in energy development and  
18 responsibilities to Nebraska residents as consumers of energy to assist  
19 in the creation and subsequent updates of the plan. The office may  
20 organize an advisory committee of individuals with diverse energy-related  
21 interests. The chairperson of the Appropriations Committee of the  
22 Legislature, the chairperson of the Natural Resources Committee of the  
23 Legislature, and three members of the Legislature selected by the  
24 Executive Board of the Legislative Council shall be ex officio members of  
25 such advisory committee.

26           (3) The plan shall include a review of and recommendations for the  
27 appropriate roles of state government, policymakers, political  
28 subdivisions, and private industry in energy planning.

29           (4) The plan shall include short-term and long-term objectives that  
30 will: Ensure a secure, reliable, and stable energy system for the  
31 residents and businesses in the state; maintain and improve the state's

1 cost-competitive energy supply and ensure access to affordable energy for  
2 all residents; promote sustainable economic growth, job creation, and  
3 economic development; and provide the means for the state's energy policy  
4 to adapt to changing circumstances.

5 (5) The state energy plan shall include, but not be limited to:

6 (a) Analysis of the state's current utility structure and supply and  
7 demand projections;

8 (b) References to and comparisons with other state plans affecting  
9 energy and opportunities for partnerships;

10 (c) Goals and recommendations:

11 (i) To ensure access to cost-competitive energy supplies at the  
12 lowest practicable environmental cost and maximum economic benefits;

13 (ii) For future economic and investment decisions, state, local, and  
14 federal government coordination, and public-private partnerships;

15 (iii) To incorporate new technologies and opportunities for energy  
16 diversification that will maximize Nebraska resources and support local  
17 economic development;

18 (iv) For an affordable and reliable energy grid;

19 (v) To pursue demand-side options wherever economically and  
20 environmentally practicable;

21 (vi) For marketing and promoting the state's renewable energy  
22 resources, including solar, wind, geothermal, and biomass;

23 (vii) For advanced transportation technologies, alternative fuels,  
24 and infrastructure;

25 (viii) To develop and enhance oil, natural gas, and electricity  
26 production and distribution;

27 (ix) For energy system resiliency and supply distribution  
28 preparedness and response;

29 (x) For a uniform process for responding to and preparing for  
30 proposed federal laws, rules, and regulations;

31 (xi) For removing barriers to increased development of renewable

1 energy for export, including the development of a transmission  
2 development strategy for the state; and

3 (xii) For a mechanism to measure the plan's progress;

4 (d) An analysis completed by the State Energy Office of the impacts  
5 to energy producers and customers resulting from federal regulations to  
6 reduce carbon dioxide emissions from fossil-fuel-fired electric  
7 generating units, including the effect on energy markets and reliability  
8 and the commercial availability of technology required to comply with  
9 such regulations. The analysis shall include the state's responsibilities  
10 and duties under the federal regulations, policy options, and  
11 recommendations for compliance.

12 Sec. 2. The State Energy Office shall: (1) Develop and disseminate  
13 impartial, transparent, and objective energy information and analysis,  
14 while taking full advantage of the capabilities of the state's agencies,  
15 public power entities, postsecondary educational institutions, federal  
16 agencies, and other organizations with relevant expertise and analytical  
17 capabilities; (2) actively seek to maximize federal and other nonstate  
18 funding and support to the state for energy efficiency, renewable energy,  
19 emerging energy technologies, and other activities of benefit to the  
20 state's overall energy future; (3) work with transmission and  
21 distribution entities, state agencies involved in the issuance of permits  
22 for energy generation facilities, and other relevant entities to ensure  
23 that the state energy plan recommends a productive and consistent method  
24 of working with and marketing the state's natural resources to developers  
25 of renewable generation who are interested in building energy generation  
26 facilities or developing or utilizing energy transmission infrastructure  
27 in the state; and (4) monitor energy transmission capacity planning and  
28 policy affecting the state and the regulatory approval process for the  
29 development of energy infrastructure and make recommendations to the  
30 Governor and electronically to the Legislature as necessary to facilitate  
31 energy infrastructure planning and development.

1           Sec. 3. The State Energy Office is authorized to obtain detailed  
2 information regarding the costs of generation, transmission, and  
3 distribution of electricity from the state's public power districts,  
4 public power and irrigation districts, municipalities, and cooperatives  
5 in order to carry out the requirements of section 2 of this act.