

# The Post-Register

## The political pulse

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### *Legislative limelights*

# House panel studies state energy plan

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The House Resources and Conservation Committee has tabled for further study the State Energy Plan, Ken Dunn, Boise, director of the Idaho Department of Water Resources, said Wednesday.

Dunn reported the committee chairman, Rep. Vard Chatburn, R-Albion, has said he plans to recall the bill embodying the plan for further discussions. The committee has held two hearings on the plan so far this session.

The motion for referring the legislation for further study was presented by Rep. Walter E. Little, R-New Plymouth.

Dunn said the plan that is included in the legislation states policy positions on what should be done for development of an energy plan.

"The legislation was drafted to begin implementation of many policies," said Dunn. "These are intended to provide the people of Idaho with an outline of how the state can best meet its energy needs of the next 20 years."

He explained the purpose of the plan, written by the governor-appointed Energy Resource Policy Board, is to assess Idaho's energy position and resources, to evaluate the potential demand versus supply capabilities, and to set forth policies which can encourage development of adequate supply, considering technical, social and economic factors.

The plan concludes that no one energy resource is sufficient to meet the varied needs of the state. Instead the state will benefit most over the next two decades by pursuing the development of a variety of resources. The Office of Energy whose staff assisted in drafting the state energy plan, has been transferred to the water resources department.

Reed Hansen, Idaho Falls, board chairman, said the board attempted to address all of the issues that will require legislative action.

He noted many of the policies are not within the province of the Idaho Legislature. Instead, he said, they should be dealt with by local governments and the Idaho Public Ut-

lities Commission.

The water board has requested the following legislation to be presented to the House Resources and Conservation Committee:

- An amendment to Idaho code 42-1734 to include the addition of energy planning and policy under the resource board.
- An amendment to the Idaho Constitution to authorize local governments and irrigation districts to issue revenue bonds for developing electrical power generating facilities, or facilities for electrical displacement.
- Legislation to provide authority for the state to undertake and implement contingency plans in the event of petroleum shortages.
- Legislation which will dedicate a portion of the revenues that come to the state from federal geothermal leases to supplement the technical assistance programs for geothermal development in Idaho.
- A requirement that new state buildings be designed to include the use of solar energy when practical.
- Solar access legislation which will require all cities and counties to guarantee solar access to the greatest extent possible in new and existing structures.
- An amendment to Idaho Code 63-3022C, which currently allows for a tax deduction for the installation of alternative energy systems and devices, to discontinue the deduction for wood stoves.
- An amendment to Idaho Code 63-20228 providing for tax deductions for conservation measures, to allow inclusion of post 1978 residences and multi-unit dwellings.

Hansen said the board will support a local option tax bill if one is introduced. He cited the energy plan's call for the use of local option taxes to fund mass transit systems as a reason to support this legislation.

"The issue of mandatory building codes as addressed in the energy plan is supported by the board, though no specific legislation is being prepared," said Hansen.

Hansen said the Idaho Energy Plan has undergone considerable reworking following the public hearings a year ago.