DRAFT 2023 Biennial Energy Assistance Report Outline

Executive summary

- Overview of the issue and statute
- A synopsis of energy assistance programs, energy burden, and energy assistance need statewide
- Identify current expenditures on low-income energy assistance
- Summarize findings from the evaluation of additional mechanisms for assistance and ways to prioritize assistance towards low-income households with higher energy burden

Introduction

- The “who, what, where, when, and why” of energy assistance
- The intent and requirements of RCW 19.405.120
  - Definitions of “low-income” and “energy assistance need” (WAC 194-40-030)
- Data collection, analysis, and summary process
  - 2020 reporting period
    - Energy Assistance Data Advisory Group
      - Sec. 120(3)(b) survey for 2019
      - Commerce collected and aggregated (3)(a) data
  - 2022 reporting period
    - Utilities report Sec. 120(3)(b) and (4) for 2019 and 2020
    - Commerce collected and aggregated (3)(a) data
    - Energy Assistance Technical Advisory Team
      - Reviews and assists in summarizing the data
      - Assists in evaluation of additional measures and mechanisms to prioritize low-income households with high energy burden.
      - Reviews draft reports
    - Public workshops

Findings from energy burden and assistance need data

- Past and present of utility data collection efforts
- Low-income Energy Affordability data (LEAD) tool findings
  - LEAD tool methodology and assumptions
    - Strengths and weaknesses of its methodology and assumptions
    - Illustrative examples of these strengths and weaknesses
  - Other ways of estimating energy burden
    - Empower Dataworks dashboards
    - Avista’s data tools
    - Puget Sound Energy’s dashboards
    - Tacoma’s equity index
- Energy efficiency potential
  - Commerce assessment of energy efficiency potential
  - Preliminary findings from energy efficiency needs assessment
Assessments of utility programs

- Summary of the programs and mechanisms used by utilities to reduce energy burden and the effectiveness of those programs and mechanisms in both short-term and sustained energy burden reductions
- Summary of the outreach strategies used to encourage participation of eligible households, including consultation with community-based organizations and Indian tribes as appropriate, and comprehensive enrollment campaigns that are linguistically and culturally appropriate to the customers they serve in vulnerable populations
- Summary of previous funding levels for energy assistance of each utility compared to the funding levels needed to meet:
  - (A) Sixty percent of the current energy assistance need, or increasing energy assistance by fifteen percent over the amount provided in 2018, whichever is greater, by 2030; and
  - (B) ninety percent of the current energy assistance need by 2050.
- Summary of the plans to improve the effectiveness of the assessed mechanisms and strategies toward meeting the energy assistance need.

Evaluation of additional mechanisms for assistance

- Customer rates
  - Definition(s)
  - Strengths
  - Drawbacks
  - Outstanding questions
- A low-income specific discount
  - Definition(s)
  - Strengths
  - Drawbacks
  - Outstanding questions
- System benefits charges
  - Definition(s)
  - Strengths
  - Drawbacks
  - Outstanding questions
- Public and private funds
  - Definition(s)
  - Strengths
  - Drawbacks
  - Outstanding questions
- Other mechanisms
  - Definition(s)
  - Strengths
  - Drawbacks
  - Outstanding question
Mechanisms to prioritize assistance to low-income households with high energy burdens

- Distributed energy resources, i.e., community solar
- Utility discount for participation in demand response programs
- Improved data collection

Appendix A – Compilation of Individual Utility Reports