



## 2021 Legislative Principles and Objectives

1. The Washington Rural Electric Cooperative Association (WRECA) and its member-owned electric cooperatives seek to collaborate with legislators and stakeholders to shape Washington State's energy policy. WRECA supports a Washington State energy policy that:
  - a. Recognizes the value of the Northwest's clean and predominantly carbon-free electricity resources, and avoids shifting the costs of carbon pollution mitigation to cooperatives that do not use carbon emitting resources.
  - b. Recognizes the impacts of policy decisions on the energy costs for Washington's rural families and businesses, and maximize the opportunities to utilize Washington's abundant and inexpensive electric energy.
  - c. Is complementary to existing state energy policy and does not add additional regulatory oversight or reporting burdens that simply add to the cost of providing electric energy.
  - d. Has no negative impacts on the reliability of the electric generation, transmission or distribution system.
  - e. Is technology neutral and provides compliance flexibility for utilities.
  - f. Provides that the timing and scale of investments in new resources and technologies are aligned with each utility's needs for resources.
2. Washington electric cooperatives support the development of safe and affordable generation resources to provide adequate capacity for our consumers' needs.
  - a. The state's public policies must recognize the need for resource adequacy and include a variety of complementary resources needed to avoid blackouts due to extreme weather and other occurrences that place high demands on the electric system.
  - b. Pacific Northwest generation and transmission resources, including those owned and operated by the Bonneville Power Administration, must be operated for the benefit primarily of the electric consumers in the Northwest. WRECA opposes the alliance of the Northwest's generation and transmission resources with any entity that would shift their primary purposes to serving electric consumers outside of the Pacific Northwest.
  - c. WRECA actively supports the creation of a Pacific Northwest-centric regional transmission organization by engaging with legislators, utilities and other stakeholders.
3. Washington electric cooperatives, as consumer-owned utilities, are well governed by those who own them and must remain independent of outside regulation from any state department or agency.

4. WRECA urges the legislature to amend the Washington Administrative Procedure Act (RCW 34.05) to make all state departments and agencies including the Washington Department of Commerce subject to the provisions of RCW 34.05.328.
5. WRECA seeks small utilities exemptions or more cost-effective compliance alternatives for small utilities. We define small utilities as those with two percent or less of the state's total number of electric consumers as reported by the most recent data from the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA).
6. WRECA prefers a national effort as the best approach to limiting greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to avoid duplicative and costly regulations that can harm Washington's competitiveness.
7. WRECA supports the propagation of rural broadband and realizes the successful build-out must be safe and economically sustainable.
8. WRECA supports the electric cooperatives' rights to determine the appropriate safe placement, permitting and rates for the joint use by any third party of any of the cooperative's distribution infrastructure. Due to safety, reliability and cybersecurity concerns, WRECA opposes any legislation or regulation that limits the cooperative's control of its infrastructure or allows third party access to any utility infrastructure without prior authorization from the cooperative and oversight by the cooperative.
9. WRECA supports wildfire mitigation planning and the coordination with forest land owners for the removal of danger trees. Cooperatives must have the right to proactively manage trees that are outside of standard Rights-of-Way or must be granted a waiver from liability arising from wildfires if permissions for danger tree management are not granted.
10. The Clean Energy Transformation Act (RCW 19.405.110) provides that any utility meeting the 2030 emission requirements has no further compliance responsibilities under the Energy Independence Act (RCW 19.285). WRECA opposes amendments to the Energy Independence Act that would increase the requirements for renewable resources, energy efficiency or conservation requirements, or that would require more utilities to comply with the Act.
11. WRECA supports the electric cooperatives' right to eminent domain.
12. WRECA opposes any amendments to the state's net metering statute unless such amendments allow utilities to establish rates and fees to prevent shifting the costs of serving net metered consumers to the consumers who are not net metered.

- 13.** WRECA supports allowing easements on state-owned land for locating renewable generation in perpetuity at no cost.
  
- 14.** WRECA opposes any carbon-pricing legislation that imposes new regulatory or financial burdens on electric cooperatives. The electric cooperatives are subject to the Clean Energy Transformation Act and are required to provide electric service to their consumers from emission-free generation resources by 2045. Therefore, any carbon-pricing legislation must:
  - a. Provide a carve-out for the electric cooperatives with no regulatory or financial burdens in addition to those required by the Clean Energy Transformation Act, or
  - b. Provide that funds raised from any financial burden placed on the electric cooperative's consumers be retained by the electric cooperative to be used to reduce the energy burden of the electric consumers.
  - c. Prohibit any funds raised by the carbon-pricing program to be allocated to the state's general fund.