

SENATE BILL NO. 337
INTRODUCED BY D. WANZENRIED

A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT EXPANDING THE MEMBERSHIP OF AN ELECTRICITY BUYING COOPERATIVE; ALLOWING BUYING COOPERATIVES TO OWN GENERATION, TRANSMISSION, AND DISTRIBUTION EQUIPMENT; ALLOWING BUYING COOPERATIVES TO PURCHASE AND SELL THE PRODUCTS NECESSARY TO PRODUCE OR USE ELECTRICITY, FUEL PRODUCED WITH RENEWABLE ENERGY FOR HEAT OR TRANSPORTATION, OR HEAT AS PART OF A COMBINED HEAT AND POWER PROGRAM; GRANTING A BUYING COOPERATIVE THE ABILITY TO LEASE PROPERTY AND LEND MONEY; AMENDING SECTIONS 35-19-107, 35-19-201, AND 35-19-202, MCA; AND PROVIDING AN IMMEDIATE EFFECTIVE DATE."

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

Section 1. Section 35-19-107, MCA, is amended to read:

"35-19-107. Membership. (1) Membership in a buying cooperative is restricted to:

(a) small customers of a distribution utility;

(b) tribes;

(c) rural electric cooperatives;

(d) municipal electric utilities; or

(e) the state of Montana and any of its political subdivisions, including but not limited to counties, municipalities, or school districts.

(2) A member may join a buying cooperative by the methods prescribed in the buying cooperative's bylaws or may be assigned to a buying cooperative by the public service commission, as provided by commission rule."

Section 2. Section 35-19-201, MCA, is amended to read:

"35-19-201. Powers of buying cooperative. A buying cooperative may:

(1) sue and be sued in its corporate name;

(2) have existence for as long as it serves its purpose;

(3) adopt a corporate seal and alter the seal at pleasure;

(4) own, lease, possess, and enjoy as much real and personal property as is necessary for the transaction of its business and sell, lease, and dispose of the property;

(5) borrow or lend money, or otherwise contract indebtedness, and pledge its property, both real and personal, to secure the payment of the borrowed money or contract for debt;

(6) enter into contracts and other obligations for:

(a) the purchase and sale to its members of:

(i) electricity to its members;

(ii) fuel produced with renewable energy for heat or transportation; or

(iii) heat as part of a combined heat and power program;

(b) the transmission or distribution of the electricity for the purpose of interconnection with electric service facilities as defined in 69-5-102, transmission facilities as defined in 69-8-103, distribution facilities as defined in 69-8-103, western area power administration facilities, Bonneville power administration facilities, or regulated or unregulated independent service operator facilities or area electrical power grids or of the fuel or heat; and

(c) the lease or use of:

(i) renewable energy generating equipment; or

(ii) capacity on transmission and distribution systems;

(7) sell or otherwise dispose of electricity on the wholesale market not consumed by its members electricity, fuel produced with renewable energy for heat or transportation, or energy used for heat as part of a combined heat and power program;

(8) conduct its business and exercise all of its powers within or outside of this state;

(9) adopt, amend, and repeal bylaws; and

(10) except as prohibited in 35-19-202, do and perform all other acts and things and have and exercise all other powers that may be necessary, convenient, or appropriate to accomplish the purpose for which the buying cooperative is organized."

Section 3. Section 35-19-202, MCA, is amended to read:

"35-19-202. Restrictions on powers of buying cooperative. Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter, a buying cooperative may not:

~~(1) construct, purchase, take, receive, or otherwise acquire or own, hold, equip, maintain, or operate electric generating plants or transmission or distribution lines or systems, except that a buying cooperative may enter into transmission or distribution agreements for the lease or use of capacity on transmission and distribution~~

systems;

~~(2)~~(1) purchase electricity for or sell electricity to commercial or industrial electric consumers having individual accounts with an average monthly demand in the previous calendar year of 100 kilowatts or more or a new commercial or industrial customer with an estimated average monthly demand of 100 kilowatts or more;

or

~~(3)~~(2) offer for sale any products other than:

(a) electricity supply;

(b) fuel produced with renewable energy for heat or transportation;

(c) energy used for heat as part of a combined heat and power program; or

(d) the products necessary to produce or use the electricity, fuel, or heat."

NEW SECTION. **Section 4. Effective date.** [This act] is effective on passage and approval.

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