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Bill Analysis

Version: As Introduced

Primary Sponsors: Reps. Rader and Glassburn

Nick Thomas, Research Analyst

SUMMARY

- Exempts portable solar generation devices (a movable photovoltaic electric generation device that satisfies certain conditions) from any interconnection requirements and any requirement to enter into an interconnection agreement with an electric utility imposed pursuant to Ohio's Competitive Retail Electric Service (CRES) law.
- Prohibits electric utilities from taking certain actions with regard to customers using a portable solar generation device such as, for example, obtaining the utility's approval before installing or using the device.
- Excludes a portable solar generation device from being considered a "net metering system" under Ohio's CRES law.
- Requires the Public Utilities Commission to adopt rules to implement the bill's requirements.

DETAILED ANALYSIS

Portable solar generation device interconnection

The bill exempts portable solar generation devices from any interconnection requirements and any requirement to enter into an interconnection agreement with an electric utility imposed pursuant to Ohio's Competitive Retail Electric Service (CRES) law. Generally, an interconnection agreement is a contract between an electric utility and a producer of electricity that establishes the terms, technical specifications, and safety standards for connecting an energy resource (such as solar panels) to the electrical grid.[1]

[1] R.C. 4928.74.

Under the bill, a "portable solar generation device" is defined as a movable photovoltaic electric generation device that:

- Has a maximum power output of no more than 1,200 watts;
- Is designed to be connected to a building's electrical system through a standard 120-volt AC outlet;
- Is intended primarily to offset part of the customer's electricity consumption; and
- Is certified by Underwriters Laboratories or an equivalent nationally recognized testing laboratory.[2]

Continuing law, unchanged by the bill, defines "electric utility" as being an electric light company that has a certified territory and that is engaged on a for-profit basis in the business of supplying at least a noncompetitive retail electric service, excluding a municipal electric utility or a billing and collection agent.[3]

Prohibited actions

The bill prohibits an electric utility from requiring a customer using a portable solar generation device from:

- Obtaining the utility's approval before installing or using the device;
- Paying any fee or charge related to the device or for feeding small amounts of electricity back into the utility grid; or
- Installing any additional controls or equipment beyond what is integrated into the device.[4]

Rules

The bill requires the Public Utilities Commission to adopt rules to implement the bill's provisions described above.[5]

Net metering

The bill excludes a portable solar generation device from being considered a net metering system, which would prevent users of such devices from qualifying for net metering under the CRES law. Current law defines a "net metering system" as a facility for the production of electrical energy that:

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[2] R.C. 4928.01(A)(44). In the time since the bill's introduction, Ohio's CRES law has been amended, requiring a corrective amendment to update the bill's placement of this definition within the CRES law definitions.

[3] R.C. 4928.01(A)(11).

[4] R.C. 4928.741.

[5] R.C. 4928.742.

- Uses as its fuel either solar, wind, biomass, landfill gas, or hydropower, or uses a microturbine or a fuel cell;
- Is located on a customer-generator's premises;
- Operates in parallel with the electric utility's transmission and distribution facilities; and
- Is intended primarily to offset part or all of the customer-generator's requirements for electricity, with other requirements for certain industrial customer-generators.

Continuing law, unchanged by the bill, defines "net metering" as measuring the difference in an applicable billing period between the electricity supplied by an electric service provider and the electricity generated by a customer-generator (a user of a net metering system) that is fed back to the electric service provider.[6]

HISTORY

Action	Date
Introduced	03-11-26

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[6] R.C. 4928.01(A)(29) to (31); R.C. 4928.67, not in the bill.