

HCS HB 376 -- MISSOURI FIRST NATURAL GAS AND NUCLEAR POWER ACT

SPONSOR: Black

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Utilities by a vote of 17 to 2, with 4 voting present. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules-Legislative by a vote of 6 to 1 with 2 voting present.

The following is a summary of the House Committee Substitute for HB 376.

This bill establishes the "Missouri First Natural Gas and Nuclear Power Act", which allows a natural gas-generating unit or clean baseload electric generating plant or facility rated at 300 megawatts or less that utilizes clean baseload electric generating plants to produce energy not in commercial operation as of August 28, 2025, to include in the corporation's rate base any amounts recorded to construction work in progress. The Public Service Commission will determine the amount of construction work in progress as specified in the bill. Base rate recoveries arising from the inclusion of construction work in progress in base rates are subject to refund.

These provisions will expire on December 31, 2035, unless the Commission determines that good cause exists to extend these provisions through December 31, 2045. The secretary of the Commission must notify the Revisor of Statutes if the conditions for the extension have been met.

The following is a summary of the public testimony from the committee hearing. The testimony was based on the introduced version of the bill.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that with the retiring baseload generating plants, additional capacity is needed to just meet the state's current energy need, not accounting for any growth in energy demand. Without this bill, building new baseload generation is cost prohibitive.

Testifying in person for the bill were Representative Black; Missouri Century Foundation; Missouri Association of Municipal Utilities; City Utilities of Springfield; Ameren MO; and Evergy.

OPPONENTS: Those who oppose the bill say that the current construction work in progress prohibition was passed by the voters in the late 1970s. It is important that the investor-owned utilities invest in the product they supply before charging

ratepayers. This bill would shift the financial risk to the ratepayers. Small modular nuclear reactors are not proven technology. The current utility rates are low in the state because the utilities use proven technologies for generation.

Testifying in person against the bill were Arnie C. Dienoff; Renew Missouri Advocates; AARP; Melissa Vatterott, Missouri Coalition for the Environment; Consumers Council of Missouri; Renew Missouri; and Ed Smith, Sierra Club.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill say the bill needs claw back provisions to ensure that ratepayers are not paying for a plant that is not brought online.

Testifying in person on the bill was Ford Motor Company.

Written testimony has been submitted for this bill. The full written testimony and witnesses testifying online can be found under Testimony on the bill page on the House website.