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HOUSE BILL NO. 945

Offered January 14, 2026

Prefiled January 13, 2026

A BILL to direct the Department of Energy to study geothermal energy and to direct the State Corporation Commission to conduct a proceeding to establish geothermal energy requirements for high energy users.

Patron—Clark

Committee Referral Pending

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. § 1. The Department of Energy (the Department) shall conduct a study on geothermal electric generating resources and geothermal heating and cooling systems, as such terms are defined in § 56-576 of the Code of Virginia. In conducting its study, the Department shall evaluate the approximate amounts of electric generation capacity available in the Commonwealth from geothermal electric generating resources and geothermal heating and cooling systems. The Department may hire an independent consultant to assist with completing such evaluation. The Department shall complete its study and submit a report of its findings and recommendations to the State Corporation Commission no later than July 1, 2027.

§ 2. The State Corporation Commission (the Commission) shall initiate a proceeding by September 30, 2027, to establish requirements for high energy users to utilize standardized amounts of capacity from geothermal electric generating resources and geothermal heating and cooling systems, as informed by the study submitted by the Department of Energy under § 1. In conducting such proceeding, the Commission shall consider feedback from the public, subject matter experts, and other stakeholders as necessary to determine the standardized amounts of capacity from geothermal electric generating resources and geothermal heating and cooling systems to be required for high energy users. For the purposes of this section, "high energy user" means a retail electric service customer of a utility regulated by the Commission with a consistent demand of 100 megawatts. The Commission shall have the authority to adjust the megawatt size threshold for high energy users to which the requirements shall apply as determined by the Commission to be appropriate to manage electric demand in the Commonwealth through the use of geothermal energy.