SENATE, No. 1923

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 25, 2020

Sponsored by:
Senator LINDA R. GREENSTEIN
District 14 (Mercer and Middlesex)

SYNOPSIS

Directs BPU to conduct study to determine whether microgrid and distributed energy resource deployment will reduce length of power outages.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.

AN ACT directing the Board of Public Utilities to conduct a study to determine whether microgrid and distributed energy resource deployment will reduce the length of power outages.

BE IT ENACTED *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:*

1. a. The Board of Public Utilities shall conduct a study concerning whether the utilization of microgrids and the deployment of distributed energy resources will reduce the length of long-term power outages in this State. The board's study shall also provide recommendations for improvements to the resilience and reliability of the State's electric distribution system.

b. In conducting the study, the board shall:

(1) compare the general performance of the State's electric distribution system to that of other states;

(2) assess the impact of the utilization of microgrids and the deployment of distributed energy resources on the length of long-term power outages in other states;

(3) consult with relevant persons and public and private entities in this State and other states that have utilized microgrids during power outages and provide information on best practices for microgrid utilization as demonstrated in other states;

(4) consult with relevant electric public utilities in this State and other states that have deployed distributed energy resources to communities during power outages;

(5) consider the costs and savings to ratepayers, government entities, electric public utilities, and the State associated with the implementation of the findings and recommendations of the written report submitted pursuant to subsection c. of this section; and

(6) provide an assessment of microgrid pilot programs established by the board, including, but not limited to, awards provided under the Town Center Microgrid Feasibility Study Program.

c. Within nine months of the effective date of this act, the board shall prepare and submit a written report of the study's findings and board's recommendations to the Governor and, pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-19.1), to the Legislature.

d. For the purposes of this act, "microgrid" means a group of interconnected loads and distributed energy resources within clearly defined electrical boundaries that acts as a single controllable entity with respect to the electric grid, which can connect and disconnect from the electric grid to enable it to operate both connected to, or independent of, the electric grid.

2. This act shall take effect immediately.

STATEMENT

This bill directs the Board of Public Utilities (BPU) to study and make findings and recommendations concerning whether the utilization of "microgrids," as that term is defined in the bill, and the deployment of distributed energy resources will assist in reducing the length of long-term power outages in the State. The BPU's study is to also provide recommendations for improvements to the resilience and reliability of the State's electric distribution system.

In conducting the study, the bill provides that the BPU is to: 1) compare the general performance of this State's electric distribution system to that of other states; 2) assess the impact of the utilization of microgrids and the deployment of distributed energy resources on the length of long-term power outages in other states; 3) consult with relevant persons and public and private entities in this State and other states that have utilized microgrids during power outages and provide information on best practices for microgrid utilization as demonstrated in other states; 4) consult with relevant electric public utilities in this State and other states that have deployed distributed energy resources to communities during power outages; 5) consider the costs and savings to ratepayers, government entities, electric public utilities, and the State associated with the implementation of the BPU's findings and recommendations; and 6) provide an assessment of microgrid pilot programs awarded through the BPU, including, but not limited to, awards provided under the Town Center Microgrid Feasibility Studies program.

The bill requires the BPU to prepare and submit the report containing its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature within six months of the enactment of the bill.