

Mike Kuglitsch

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 84TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

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Contact: Representative Mike Kuglitsch (608) 267-5158

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Assembly Approves PSC Reform Legislation

Madison — Today the State Assembly approved AB 804, authored by Rep. Mike Kuglitsch (R-New Berlin). The bill is a package of technical changes that streamline various regulations at the Public Service Commission.

“Assembly Republicans are working towards a lean and efficient government by bringing our statutes up to date with current practices,” said Kuglitsch. **“Although AB 804 deals mostly with technical changes, this bill will ultimately assist utility and transmission companies in delivering their products and services to customers across the state in a more efficient and effective manner.”**

Wisconsin’s energy efficiency program, known as Focus on Energy, is funded by an assessment of 1.2% of wholesale and retail revenue generated by Wisconsin utilities. This 1.2% is passed along to ratepayers. Since some investor-owned utilities sell their energy on the wholesale market, retail customers are forced to pay an additional seven million dollars to Wisconsin’s Focus on Energy program in the form of a double tax. AB 804 clarifies that an assessment can only be made on the retail revenues generated by a utility, ensuring that no ratepayer’s utility bill is taxed twice.

“As a customer of a utility that sells energy on the wholesale market, I believe it is important to clarify the intent of the program and promote a fair energy market for Wisconsinites,” said Kuglitsch. **“While I believe that the Focus on Energy program has benefits for the state, the seven million dollars going back to the citizens of Wisconsin in the form of rate reductions is a win for all citizens.”**

AB 804 deletes repetitive compliance reports with regards to sulfur dioxide emissions by Wisconsin utilities. It also streamlines transmission rebuilds by providing an exemption from the requirement that a transmission company obtains a certificate of authority from the PSC. A transmission rebuild involves the replacement of all or part of an existing line or substation and the exemption is only allowable if the project will not have undue adverse environmental impacts.

“Wisconsin utilities have already met and exceeded state and federal standards with regards to sulfur dioxide emissions. SO₂ emissions are already enforceable in other statutes and there is no need to file a repetitive report, said Kuglitsch. “Additionally, the simplified process for transmission rebuilds will allow for more cost effective projects, which will directly impact citizens with rate reductions moving forward.”

AB 804 passed on a vote of 61-33. The bill now awaits action in the State Senate.