Second Regular Session Sixty-seventh General Assembly STATE OF COLORADO

REENGROSSED

This Version Includes All Amendments Adopted in the House of Introduction **HOUSE BILL 10-1342**

LLS NO. 10-0746.01 Duane Gall

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A BILL FOR AN ACT

101	CONCERNING MEASURES TO ENCOURAGE ADDITIONAL INVESTMENT IN
102	SOLAR ENERGY GENERATION FACILITIES, AND, IN CONNECTION
103	THEREWITH, AUTHORIZING THE CREATION OF COMMUNITY
104	SOLAR GARDENS.

Bill Summary

(Note: This summary applies to this bill as introduced and does not reflect any amendments that may be subsequently adopted. If this bill passes third reading in the house of introduction, a bill summary that applies to the reengrossed version of this bill will be available at http://www.leg.state.co.us/billsummaries.)

Existing law directs the Colorado public utilities commission (PUC) to adopt rules implementing the renewable energy portfolio

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standards (RPS) for electric utilities, under which increasing amounts of electricity must be generated from renewable sources. The current rules provide for standard rebates for the cost of installation and renewable energy credits (RECs) to promote customer-sited solar generation facilities.

The bill directs the PUC to adopt new rules under which standard offers can apply to solar generation facilities that are beneficially owned by 10 or more customers at a shared location, called a "community solar garden". This will help customers participate in solar generation even though solar facilities on their own properties may not be feasible due to cost, the physical characteristics of their sites, their status as renters, or other factors.

Section 1 of the bill amends an existing legislative declaration to state that it is in the public interest to allow renters and low-income utility customers to own interests in solar generation facilities, to make interests in solar generation facilities portable and transferable, and to leverage Colorado's solar generating capacity through economies of scale. Section 1 also:

- Defines a solar community garden as an on-site eligible solar electric generation facility with a nameplate rating of 2 megawatts or less and in which subscriptions are owned by 10 or more customers of a qualifying retail utility;
- ! Limits the size of a subscription to 120% of the average annual electric consumption of each subscriber at the premises to which the subscription is attributed;
- ! Allows the creation of a community solar garden owned by a subscriber organization, subject to rules adopted by the PUC by October 1, 2010;
- ! Specifies that, in their first 2 compliance plan years after the effective date of the bill, qualifying retail utilities must purchase the greater of 3 megawatts, or half their total purchases of electricity from community solar gardens, from gardens that are sized at 500 kilowatts or smaller;
- Exempts community solar gardens from the definition of a utility; and
- ! Specifies that section 1 does not apply to cooperative electric associations or municipally owned utilities.

Section 2 makes conforming amendments to the existing RPS statute (a/k/a "Amendment 37").

1 Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:

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SECTION 1. 40-2-127, Colorado Revised Statutes, is amended

1 to read:

40-2-127. Community energy funds - community solar
gardens - definitions - rules - legislative declaration - repeal.
(1) Legislative declaration. The general assembly hereby finds and
declares that:

6 (a) Local communities can benefit from the further development 7 of renewable energy, energy efficiency, conservation, and environmental 8 improvement projects, and the general assembly hereby encourages 9 electric utilities to establish community energy funds for the development 10 of such projects;

(b) IT IS IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST THAT BROADER PARTICIPATION
IN SOLAR ELECTRIC GENERATION BY COLORADO RESIDENTS AND
COMMERCIAL ENTITIES BE ENCOURAGED BY THE DEVELOPMENT AND
DEPLOYMENT OF DISTRIBUTED SOLAR ELECTRIC GENERATING FACILITIES
KNOWN AS COMMUNITY SOLAR GARDENS, IN ORDER TO:

(I) PROVIDE COLORADO RESIDENTS AND COMMERCIAL ENTITIES
WITH THE OPPORTUNITY TO PARTICIPATE IN SOLAR GENERATION IN
ADDITION TO THE OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE FOR ROOFTOP SOLAR
GENERATION ON HOMES AND BUSINESSES;

20 (II) ALLOW RENTERS AND LOW-INCOME UTILITY CUSTOMERS TO
21 OWN INTERESTS IN SOLAR GENERATION FACILITIES;

(III) ALLOW INTERESTS IN SOLAR GENERATION FACILITIES TO BE
PORTABLE AND TRANSFERRABLE; AND

24 (IV) LEVERAGE COLORADO'S SOLAR GENERATING CAPACITY
 25 THROUGH ECONOMIES OF SCALE.

26 (2) Definitions. As used in this section, unless the context
27 OTHERWISE REQUIRES:

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(a) THE DEFINITIONS IN SECTION 40-2-124 APPLY; AND

(b) IN ADDITION:

3 (I) (A) "COMMUNITY SOLAR GARDEN" MEANS A SOLAR ELECTRIC 4 GENERATION FACILITY WITH A NAMEPLATE RATING OF TWO MEGAWATTS 5 OR LESS THAT IS LOCATED IN OR NEAR A COMMUNITY SERVED BY A 6 QUALIFYING RETAIL UTILITY WHERE THE BENEFICIAL USE OF THE 7 ELECTRICITY GENERATED BY THE FACILITY BELONGS TO THE SUBSCRIBERS 8 TO THE COMMUNITY SOLAR GARDEN. THERE SHALL BE AT LEAST TEN 9 SUBSCRIBERS. THE OWNER OF THE COMMUNITY SOLAR GARDEN MAY BE 10 THE QUALIFYING RETAIL UTILITY OR ANY OTHER FOR-PROFIT OR 11 NONPROFIT ENTITY OR ORGANIZATION, INCLUDING A SUBSCRIBER 12 ORGANIZATION ORGANIZED UNDER THIS SECTION, THAT CONTRACTS TO 13 SELL THE OUTPUT FROM THE COMMUNITY SOLAR GARDEN TO THE 14 QUALIFYING RETAIL UTILITY. A COMMUNITY SOLAR GARDEN SHALL BE DEEMED TO BE "LOCATED ON THE SITE OF CUSTOMER FACILITIES". 15

16 (B) A COMMUNITY SOLAR GARDEN SHALL CONSTITUTE "RETAIL
17 DISTRIBUTED GENERATION" WITHIN THE MEANING OF SECTION 40-2-124,
18 AS AMENDED BY HOUSE BILL 10-1001, ENACTED IN 2010.

19 (II) "SUBSCRIBER" MEANS A RETAIL CUSTOMER OF A QUALIFYING 20 RETAIL UTILITY WHO OWNS A SUBSCRIPTION AND WHO HAS IDENTIFIED ONE 21 OR MORE PHYSICAL LOCATIONS TO WHICH THE SUBSCRIPTION SHALL BE 22 ATTRIBUTED. SUCH PHYSICAL LOCATIONS SHALL BE WITHIN EITHER THE 23 SAME MUNICIPALITY OR THE SAME COUNTY AS THE COMMUNITY SOLAR 24 GARDEN; EXCEPT THAT, IF THE SUBSCRIBER LIVES IN A COUNTY WITH A 25 POPULATION OF LESS THAN TWENTY THOUSAND, ACCORDING TO THE MOST 26 RECENT AVAILABLE CENSUS FIGURES, SUCH PHYSICAL LOCATIONS MAY BE 27 IN A COUNTY ADJACENT TO THAT OF THE COMMUNITY SOLAR GARDEN.

THE SUBSCRIBER MAY CHANGE FROM TIME TO TIME THE PREMISES TO
 WHICH THE COMMUNITY SOLAR GARDEN ELECTRICITY GENERATION SHALL
 BE ATTRIBUTED, SO LONG AS THE PREMISES ARE WITHIN THE
 GEOGRAPHICAL LIMITS ALLOWED FOR A SUBSCRIBER.

5 (III) "SUBSCRIPTION" MEANS A PROPORTIONAL INTEREST IN SOLAR 6 ELECTRIC GENERATION FACILITIES INSTALLED AT A COMMUNITY SOLAR 7 GARDEN, TOGETHER WITH THE RENEWABLE ENERGY CREDITS ASSOCIATED 8 WITH OR ATTRIBUTABLE TO SUCH FACILITIES UNDER SECTION 40-2-124. 9 EACH SUBSCRIPTION SHALL BE SIZED TO REPRESENT AT LEAST ONE 10 KILOWATT OF THE COMMUNITY SOLAR GARDEN'S GENERATING CAPACITY 11 AND TO SUPPLY NO MORE THAN ONE HUNDRED TWENTY PERCENT OF THE 12 AVERAGE ANNUAL CONSUMPTION OF ELECTRICITY BY EACH SUBSCRIBER 13 AT THE PREMISES TO WHICH THE SUBSCRIPTION IS ATTRIBUTED, WITH A 14 DEDUCTION FOR THE AMOUNT OF ANY EXISTING SOLAR FACILITIES AT SUCH 15 PREMISES. SUBSCRIPTIONS IN A COMMUNITY SOLAR GARDEN MAY BE 16 TRANSFERRED OR ASSIGNED TO A SUBSCRIBER ORGANIZATION OR TO ANY 17 PERSON OR ENTITY WHO QUALIFIES TO BE A SUBSCRIBER UNDER THIS 18 SECTION.

19 Subscriber organization - subscriber qualifications -(3)20 transferability of subscriptions. (a) THE COMMUNITY SOLAR GARDEN 21 MAY BE OWNED BY A SUBSCRIBER ORGANIZATION, WHOSE SOLE PURPOSE 22 SHALL BE BENEFICIALLY OWNING AND OPERATING A COMMUNITY SOLAR 23 GARDEN. THE SUBSCRIBER ORGANIZATION MAY BE ANY FOR-PROFIT OR 24 NONPROFIT ENTITY PERMITTED BY COLORADO LAW. THE COMMUNITY 25 SOLAR GARDEN MAY ALSO BE BUILT, OWNED, AND OPERATED BY A THIRD 26 PARTY UNDER CONTRACT WITH THE SUBSCRIBER ORGANIZATION.

27 (b) ON OR BEFORE OCTOBER 1, 2010, THE COMMISSION SHALL

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COMMENCE A RULE-MAKING PROCEEDING TO ADOPT RULES AS NECESSARY
 TO IMPLEMENT THIS SECTION, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO RULES TO
 FACILITATE THE FINANCING OF SUBSCRIBER-OWNED COMMUNITY SOLAR
 GARDENS. SUCH RULES SHALL INCLUDE:

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(I) MINIMUM CAPITALIZATION;

6 (II) THE SHARE OF A COMMUNITY SOLAR GARDEN'S ELIGIBLE
7 SOLAR ELECTRIC GENERATION FACILITIES THAT A SUBSCRIBER
8 ORGANIZATION MAY AT ANY TIME OWN IN ITS OWN NAME; AND

9 (III) AUTHORIZING SUBSCRIBER ORGANIZATIONS TO ENTER INTO
10 LEASES, SALE-AND-LEASEBACK TRANSACTIONS, OPERATING AGREEMENTS,
11 AND OTHER OWNERSHIP ARRANGEMENTS WITH THIRD PARTIES.

12 (c) IF A SUBSCRIBER CEASES TO BE A CUSTOMER AT THE PREMISES 13 ON WHICH THE SUBSCRIPTION IS BASED BUT, WITHIN A REASONABLE 14 PERIOD AS DETERMINED BY THE COMMISSION, BECOMES A CUSTOMER AT 15 ANOTHER PREMISES IN THE SERVICE TERRITORY OF THE QUALIFYING 16 RETAIL UTILITY AND WITHIN THE GEOGRAPHIC AREA SERVED BY THE 17 COMMUNITY SOLAR GARDEN, THE SUBSCRIPTION SHALL CONTINUE IN 18 EFFECT BUT THE BILL CREDIT AND OTHER FEATURES OF THE SUBSCRIPTION 19 SHALL BE ADJUSTED AS NECESSARY TO REFLECT ANY DIFFERENCES 20 BETWEEN THE NEW AND PREVIOUS PREMISES' CUSTOMER CLASSIFICATION 21 AND AVERAGE ANNUAL CONSUMPTION OF ELECTRICITY.

(4) Community solar gardens not subject to regulation.
NEITHER THE OWNERS OF NOR THE SUBSCRIBERS TO A COMMUNITY SOLAR
GARDEN SHALL BE CONSIDERED PUBLIC UTILITIES SUBJECT TO REGULATION
BY THE COMMISSION SOLELY AS A RESULT OF THEIR INTEREST IN THE
COMMUNITY SOLAR GARDEN. PRICES PAID FOR SUBSCRIPTIONS IN
COMMUNITY SOLAR GARDENS SHALL NOT BE SUBJECT TO REGULATION BY

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1 THE COMMISSION.

(5) Purchases of the output from community solar gardens.
(a) (I) EACH QUALIFYING RETAIL UTILITY SHALL SET FORTH IN ITS
PLAN FOR ACQUISITION OF RENEWABLE RESOURCES A PLAN TO
PURCHASE THE ELECTRICITY AND RENEWABLE ENERGY CREDITS
GENERATED FROM ONE OR MORE COMMUNITY SOLAR GARDENS OVER THE
PERIOD COVERED BY THE PLAN.

8 (II) FOR THE FIRST TWO COMPLIANCE YEARS COMMENCING 9 WITH THE 2011 COMPLIANCE YEAR, EACH QUALIFYING RETAIL 10 UTILITY SHALL ISSUE ONE OR MORE STANDARD OFFERS TO PURCHASE THE 11 OUTPUT FROM COMMUNITY SOLAR GARDENS OF FIVE HUNDRED KILOWATTS 12 OR LESS AT PRICES THAT ARE COMPARABLE TO THE PRICES OFFERED 13 BY THE QUALIFYING RETAIL UTILITY UNDER STANDARD OFFERS ISSUED FOR 14 ON-SITE SOLAR GENERATION. DURING THESE TWO COMPLIANCE YEARS, 15 THE QUALIFYING RETAIL UTILITY SHALL ACQUIRE, THROUGH THESE 16 STANDARD OFFERS, THE GREATER OF THREE MEGAWATTS OR ONE-HALF OF THE SOLAR GARDEN GENERATION IT PLANS TO ACQUIRE, TO THE 17 18 EXTENT THE QUALIFYING RETAIL UTILITY RECEIVES RESPONSES TO ITS 19 STANDARD OFFERS. RENEWABLE ENERGY CREDITS GENERATED 20 FROM SOLAR GARDENS SHALL NOT BE USED TO ACHIEVE MORE THAN 21 TWENTY PERCENT OF THE RETAIL DISTRIBUTED GENERATION STANDARD IN 22 YEARS 2011 THROUGH 2014.

(III) FOR EACH QUALIFYING RETAIL UTILITY'S COMPLIANCE
YEARS COMMENCING IN 2014 AND THEREAFTER, THE COMMISSION SHALL
DETERMINE THE MINIMUM AND MAXIMUM PURCHASES OF
ELECTRICAL OUTPUT FROM NEWLY INSTALLED COMMUNITY SOLAR
GARDENS OF DIFFERENT OUTPUT CAPACITY THAT THE QUALIFYING RETAIL

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1 UTILITY SHALL PLAN TO ACQUIRE, WITHOUT REGARD TO THE 2 SIX-MEGAWATT CEILING OF THE FIRST TWO COMPLIANCE YEARS. IN 3 ADDITION, AS NECESSARY, THE COMMISSION SHALL FORMULATE AND 4 IMPLEMENT POLICIES CONSISTENT WITH THIS SECTION THAT 5 SIMULTANEOUSLY ENCOURAGE:

6 (A) THE OWNERSHIP BY CUSTOMERS OF SUBSCRIPTIONS IN
7 COMMUNITY SOLAR GARDENS AND OF OTHER FORMS OF DISTRIBUTED
8 GENERATION, TO THE EXTENT THE COMMISSION FINDS THERE TO BE
9 CUSTOMER DEMAND FOR SUCH OWNERSHIP;

10 (B) OWNERSHIP IN COMMUNITY SOLAR GARDENS BY RESIDENTIAL
11 RETAIL CUSTOMERS, INCLUDING LOW-INCOME CUSTOMERS, TO THE EXTENT
12 THE COMMISSION FINDS THERE TO BE DEMAND FOR SUCH OWNERSHIP;

13 (C) THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNITY SOLAR GARDENS WITH
14 ATTRIBUTES THAT THE COMMISSION FINDS RESULT IN LOWER OVERALL
15 TOTAL COSTS FOR THE QUALIFYING RETAIL UTILITY'S CUSTOMERS;

16 (D) SUCCESSFUL FINANCING AND OPERATION OF COMMUNITY
 17 SOLAR GARDENS OWNED BY SUBSCRIBER ORGANIZATIONS; AND

18 (E) THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF SECTION
19 40-2-124.

20 (b) (I) THE OUTPUT FROM A COMMUNITY SOLAR GARDEN SHALL BE 21 SOLD ONLY TO THE OUALIFYING RETAIL UTILITY SERVING THE GEOGRAPHIC 22 AREA WHERE THE COMMUNITY SOLAR GARDEN IS LOCATED. ONCE A 23 COMMUNITY SOLAR GARDEN IS PART OF A QUALIFYING RETAIL UTILITY'S 24 PLAN FOR ACQUISITION OF RENEWABLE RESOURCES, AS APPROVED BY 25 THE COMMISSION, THE QUALIFYING RETAIL UTILITY SHALL PURCHASE ALL 26 OF THE ELECTRICITY AND RENEWABLE ENERGY CREDITS GENERATED BY 27 THE COMMUNITY SOLAR GARDEN. THE AMOUNT OF ELECTRICITY AND

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RENEWABLE ENERGY CREDITS GENERATED BY EACH COMMUNITY SOLAR
 GARDEN SHALL BE DETERMINED BY A PRODUCTION METER INSTALLED BY
 THE QUALIFYING RETAIL UTILITY OR THIRD-PARTY SYSTEM OWNER AND
 PAID FOR BY THE OWNER OF THE COMMUNITY SOLAR GARDEN.

5 (II) THE PURCHASE OF THE OUTPUT OF A COMMUNITY SOLAR 6 GARDEN BY A QUALIFYING RETAIL UTILITY SHALL TAKE THE FORM OF A 7 NET METERING CREDIT AGAINST THE QUALIFYING RETAIL UTILITY'S 8 ELECTRIC BILL TO EACH COMMUNITY SOLAR GARDEN SUBSCRIBER AT THE 9 PREMISES SET FORTH IN THE SUBSCRIBER'S SUBSCRIPTION. THE NET 10 METERING CREDIT SHALL BE CALCULATED BY MULTIPLYING THE 11 SUBSCRIBER'S SHARE OF THE ELECTRICITY PRODUCTION FROM THE 12 COMMUNITY SOLAR GARDEN BY THE RETAIL RATE PER KILOWATT-HOUR OF 13 THE QUALIFYING RETAIL UTILITY, MINUS A REASONABLE CHARGE AS DETERMINED BY THE COMMISSION TO COVER THE UTILITY'S COSTS OF 14 15 DELIVERING TO THE SUBSCRIBER'S PREMISES THE ELECTRICITY GENERATED 16 BY THE COMMUNITY SOLAR GARDEN, INTEGRATING THE SOLAR 17 GENERATION WITH THE UTILITY'S SYSTEM, AND ADMINISTERING THE 18 COMMUNITY SOLAR GARDEN'S CONTRACTS AND NET METERING CREDITS. 19 IF, AND TO THE EXTENT THAT, A SUBSCRIBER'S NET METERING CREDIT 20 EXCEEDS THE ELECTRICITY GENERATION CHARGE ON A SUBSCRIBER'S 21 ELECTRIC BILL IN ANY BILLING PERIOD. THE NET METERING CREDIT SHALL 22 BE CARRIED FORWARD AND APPLIED AGAINST FUTURE BILLS. THE 23 QUALIFYING RETAIL UTILITY AND THE OWNER OF THE COMMUNITY SOLAR 24 GARDEN SHALL AGREE ON WHETHER THE PURCHASE OF THE RENEWABLE 25 ENERGY CREDITS FROM SUBSCRIBERS WILL BE ACCOMPLISHED THROUGH 26 A CREDIT ON EACH SUBSCRIBER'S ELECTRICITY BILL OR BY A PAYMENT TO 27 THE OWNER OF THE COMMUNITY SOLAR GARDEN.

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(c) THE OWNER OF THE COMMUNITY SOLAR GARDEN SHALL
 PROVIDE REAL-TIME PRODUCTION DATA TO THE QUALIFYING RETAIL
 UTILITY TO FACILITATE INCORPORATION OF THE COMMUNITY SOLAR
 GARDEN INTO THE UTILITY'S OPERATION OF ITS ELECTRIC SYSTEM AND TO
 FACILITATE THE PROVISION OF NET METERING CREDITS.

6 (d) THE OWNER OF THE COMMUNITY SOLAR GARDEN SHALL BE 7 RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING TO THE QUALIFYING RETAIL UTILITY, ON A 8 MONTHLY BASIS AND WITHIN REASONABLE PERIODS SET BY THE 9 QUALIFYING RETAIL UTILITY, THE PERCENTAGE SHARES THAT SHOULD BE 10 USED TO DETERMINE THE NET METERING CREDIT TO EACH SUBSCRIBER. IF 11 THE ELECTRICITY OUTPUT OF THE COMMUNITY SOLAR GARDEN IS NOT 12 FULLY SUBSCRIBED, THE QUALIFYING RETAIL UTILITY SHALL PURCHASE 13 THE UNSUBSCRIBED RENEWABLE ENERGY AND THE RENEWABLE ENERGY 14 CREDITS AT A RATE EQUAL TO THE QUALIFYING RETAIL UTILITY'S AVERAGE 15 HOURLY INCREMENTAL COST OF ELECTRICITY SUPPLY OVER THE 16 IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING CALENDAR YEAR.

17 (e) EACH QUALIFYING RETAIL UTILITY SHALL SET FORTH IN ITS
18 PLAN FOR ACQUISITION OF RENEWABLE RESOURCES A PROPOSAL FOR
19 INCLUDING LOW-INCOME CUSTOMERS AS SUBSCRIBERS TO A COMMUNITY
20 SOLAR GARDEN. THE UTILITY MAY GIVE PREFERENCE TO COMMUNITY
21 SOLAR GARDENS THAT HAVE LOW-INCOME SUBSCRIBERS.

(f) QUALIFYING RETAIL UTILITIES SHALL BE ELIGIBLE FOR THE
INCENTIVES AND SUBJECT TO THE OWNERSHIP LIMITATIONS SET FORTH IN
SECTION 40-2-124 (1) (f) FOR UTILITY INVESTMENTS IN COMMUNITY
SOLAR GARDENS AND MAY RECOVER THROUGH RATES A MARGIN ON ALL
ENERGY AND RENEWABLE ENERGY CREDITS PURCHASED FROM
COMMUNITY SOLAR GARDENS. SUCH INCENTIVE PAYMENTS SHALL BE

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EXCLUDED FROM THE COST ANALYSIS REQUIRED BY SECTION 40-2-124 (1)
 (g).

(6) NOTHING IN THIS SECTION SHALL BE CONSTRUED TO WAIVE OR
SUPERSEDE THE RETAIL RATE IMPACT LIMITATIONS IN SECTION 40-2-124
(1) (g). UTILITY EXPENDITURES FOR UNSUBSCRIBED ENERGY AND
RENEWABLE ENERGY CREDITS GENERATED BY COMMUNITY SOLAR
GARDENS SHALL BE INCLUDED IN THE CALCULATIONS OF RETAIL RATE
IMPACT REQUIRED BY THAT SECTION.

9 (7) Applicability to cooperative electric associations and 10 municipally owned utilities. This SECTION SHALL NOT APPLY TO 11 COOPERATIVE ELECTRIC ASSOCIATIONS OR TO MUNICIPALLY OWNED 12 UTILITIES.

SECTION 2. Safety clause. The general assembly hereby finds,
 determines, and declares that this act is necessary for the immediate
 preservation of the public peace, health, and safety.