

SB329 Remarks

Good afternoon Madame Chair and members of the committee. I'm Senator Chris Brooks, from Senate District 3 in Clark County.

Before I begin I want to mention that I'm presenting this bill per a conceptual amendment, and not as introduced.

Nevada is no stranger to natural disasters. From increased wildfires which have burned North and South, to earthquakes (which we have more of compared to most other states), such events have often posed a danger to our public safety, our economy, and critical infrastructure such as the electric grid. Because of this reality, we owe it to ourselves to take proactive measures against natural disasters. This is why I am introducing Senate Bill 329.

This legislation would require electric utilities to present a natural disaster protection plan to the Public Utilities Commission of Nevada. Reports in this vein would be required every three years.

The plan would be required to include the following aspects:

- The identification of areas within electric utilities' service jurisdictions that are at a heightened risk of fires or other natural disasters.
- Cost effective strategies and methods to *mitigate* fires and other natural disasters.
- Preventative measures aimed at ensuring fires don't start because of electrical equipment.

And

- Ways to de-energize distribution lines and disable reclosers in the event of a fire or other natural disaster.

The plan would further be required to adhere to the International Wildland Urban Interface Code, as outlined in NAC 477 and NRS 477 by the State Fire Marshal.

SB329 would also include a section that defines a qualified electrical worker as an individual who has completed a four year certified electrical lineman apprenticeship, or has performed 10,000 hours of work as a journey lineman and a minimum of 1,500 hours of documented live line conductor work at a minimum voltage of 4.160 kv or above. Apprentices are further required to be indentured in a certified electrical lineman apprenticeship. This is to ensure that people

entrusted with our electrical systems have the experience to handle everything safely and smartly.

The Camp Fire in California and similar events throughout the country have shown us that an improperly built electric grid can wreak havoc on our residents. PG&E electricity has claimed responsibility for that aforementioned disaster, which destroyed most of the town of Paradise, because of faulty equipment at power plants.

We must prevent this from happening in our State. SB329 would provide us with some of the means to do so.

I strongly encourage my colleagues to pass this bill. Thank you.