

S.F. No. 1621 – Participant Compensation in Public Utilities Commission Proceedings (As amended by SCS1621A-5)

Author: Senator Nick A. Frentz

Prepared by: Carlton Doyle Fontaine, Senate Counsel (651/296-4395)

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S.F. 1621 establishes eligibility criteria and a process for participant compensation in specific Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (PUC) proceedings.

Section 1. Subdivision 1. **Definitions.** Defines “participant,” “party,” “proceeding,” and “public utility” for purposes of the section.

Subdivision 2. **Participants; eligibility.** Specifies the types of participants that are eligible to receive compensation and includes Minnesota nonprofit organizations, tribal governments located in Minnesota, and Minnesota residents, excluding individuals that are owners of for-profit businesses.

Subdivision 3. **Compensation; conditions.** Allows the PUC to order a public utility to compensate all or part of an eligible participant's reasonable costs of participation if the participant has materially assisted the commission's deliberation; and if the participant is a nonprofit that would suffer financial hardship without compensation for participation. Provides conditions for the PUC when making determinations for participant compensation.

Subdivision 4. **Compensation; amount.** Specifies that the maximum amount that may be received in compensation by a single participant is \$50,000 for a proceeding, unless a proceeding is longer than 12 months, a participant may request compensation up to \$50,000 for costs incurred each calendar year; and in a general rate case proceeding or integrated resource plan, the maximum single participant compensation is capped at \$75,000. Caps the amount that a single participant may receive per calendar year at \$200,000. Provides maximum amounts that a single public utility may be required to pay in aggregate compensation per year for participant compensation.

Subdivision 5. **Compensation; process.** Requires a participant seeking compensation to file a request with the PUC and each party to the proceeding. Provides the information that must be included in a compensation request. Provides deadlines for submission of information, compensation decisions, and requests for reconsideration.

Subdivision 6. **Compensation; orders.** Requires a public utility that is ordered by the PUC to make a payment of participant compensation, to pay the compensation and file proof of payment with the commission. When multiple utilities are involved, requires the commission to apportion participant costs in proportion to each public utility's annual revenue. Allows the PUC to issue orders to allow a public utility to recover the costs of participant compensation.

Subdivision 7. **Report.** Requires by July 1, 2025, that the PUC to report to the legislature on the amounts of compensation paid, recipients of compensation, and the impact of the positions of the compensated participants on the commission's decisions.