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LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE
BILL ANALYSIS
53rd Legislature, 1st Session, 2017

Bill Number	<u>SB476</u>	Sponsor	<u>Padilla</u>
Tracking Number	<u>.206966.1</u>	Committee Referrals	<u>SCONC/SFC</u>
Short Title	<u>Public Elementary School Solar Panels</u>		
Analyst	<u>Rogne</u>	Original Date	<u>2/22/17</u>
		Last Updated	<u></u>

BILL SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

Senate Bill 476 (SB476) would require the Public School Capital Outlay Council (PSCOC) to develop a plan to purchase and install solar energy panels on public elementary schools. The plan would designate elementary schools eligible to receive the solar panels based on school size, from largest to smallest. In FY18 through FY21, the Public School Facilities Authority (PSFA) would procure services with certified resident contractors to install the solar energy panels in accordance with the plan developed by the PSCOC. PSFA would administer the solar energy panels fund created by SB476.

FISCAL IMPACT

SB476 does not contain an appropriation, but creates a fund to receive appropriations or revenues to purchase and install solar energy panels. As the appropriations and revenues are unknown at this time, the number of elementary schools which may receive solar energy panels is also unknown. Thus, the fiscal impact for SB476 is indeterminate.

SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

According to PSFA, it may take 20 to 30 years for a district to realize enough savings from solar panels to equal the initial installation cost. The return on investment can be difficult to calculate since the cost per kilowatt credited to the district from the electric provider for each watt generated can vary. Additional maintenance costs are also required throughout the life of the photovoltaic panels, since the panels last approximately 20 to 25 years but inverters only last approximately 10 to 15 years. As a result, any potential savings going back into the solar energy panels fund may be significantly less than the up-front installation costs.

SB476 does not indicate whether or not charter schools would be considered eligible elementary schools for solar panel funding.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

In order to develop procurement documents, procure services, execute contracts, oversee, and close out the solar panel installation projects, PSFA estimates that at least one additional FTE would be needed.

RELATED BILLS

SB476 relates to duplicate bills HB338/SB342, Community Solar Gardens Act. If both bills were to pass, HB338/SB342 could provide a framework for the financing and interconnection of the solar energy panels installed on public elementary school buildings pursuant to SB476.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- LESC Files
- Public Regulation Commission
- Public School Facilities Authority

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