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CAPITOL ALERT

Democrats kill bill to require all renewable energy in California by 2046

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After facing late opposition from labor unions, a measure to require utility companies to use renewable energy for all of the retail electricity sold in the state faltered in the final week of the legislative session.

Senate Bill 100, introduced by Sen. President Pro Tem Kevin de León, calls for all retail electricity sold in the state by utility companies to come from renewable energy and zero-carbon sources by 2046. The measure also accelerates the timeline to hit interim targets that became law under Senate Bill 350 in 2015.

According to current law, 50 percent of California electricity must come from renewable sources by the end of 2030, which the proposal shifts to 2026. The state would need to hit 52 percent by 2028 and 60 percent by 2031.

The measure faced unusual opposition from labor unions that originally endorsed the measure. Utility and electrical workers changed sides late in the game after de León refused to accept their amendments to the bill. The California Coalition of Utility Employees and the California State Association of Electrical Workers had been urging members of the Assembly to kill the bill.

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Assemblyman Chris Holden, D-Pasadena, elected to hold the bill in the house's utility and energy committee, effectively killing it for the year. Holden, the utility chair, said the measure came to his committee too late to craft amendments that appeased labor and still resulted in sound policy. A ballot measure voters passed in November requires bills to be in print without changes for 72 hours before the final vote.

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