

Proposed Senate bills aim to increase state oversight of PJM electric grid operator

PUBLISHED OCTOBER 14, 2025 BY ROBERT SWIFT



Power lines stretch into the distance over the Meadowlands in North Arlington, N.J., Tuesday, April 6, 2021. (AP Photo/Seth Wenig)

Two proposed bills in the Senate seek greater state oversight over PJM, the operator of the regional electric transmission grid bringing new power generators on line.

PJM is at the center of a growing debate over meeting new demand for energy from data centers, artificial intelligence and industry while reducing bills for electric consumers.

Sen. Gene Yaw, R-Lycoming, majority chair of the Senate Environmental Resources

and Energy Committee, is drafting a bill giving the state Public Utility Commission oversight over forecasts relied on by PJM to project future electric demand.

Sen. Nick Pisciotano, D-Allegheny, is drafting a resolution directing a Joint State Government Commission study of whether Pennsylvania's continued participation in PJM is in the state's and ratepayers' interests.

The senators are circulating co-sponsor memos one month after Gov. Josh Shapiro called on PJM to bring new electric power generators onto the grid faster or risk Pennsylvania leaving the network. Shapiro spoke at an energy summit that his office organized in Philadelphia.

PJM has said it's working to connect new generation by clearing projects in its queue, using artificial intelligence to reduce processing time and expediting projects most likely to be built.

Yaw said he wants to ensure accurate electric load forecasting in reports that utilities submit to PJM with his pending bill.

PJM relies on these reports to establish capacity requirements for its capacity auctions for electric power purchased for the wholesale market. The auction secures the appropriate amount of electric power to meet predicted consumer demand. Utilities pass the cost onto consumers as a generation charge.

Yaw said the process by which utilities submit information to PJM is opaque, leading to a lack of confidence in the reports' validity. He referred to a recent report showing one utility projecting its load to grow more than 200 percent during the next nine years while a neighboring utility projects 11 percent growth during the same period.

"Moving forward, accurate load forecasting is essential to ensure system reliability, avoid resource overbuilding and underbuilding, and protect Pennsylvania consumers from unnecessary costs," wrote Yaw.

The senator wants to give the state Public Utility Commission authority to review and

validate load forecasts submitted to PJM, coordinate with PJM to ensure accuracy, avoid duplicative counting of projects and obtain needed information to provide oversight.

Pisciotano said a study is needed to determine whether Pennsylvania remains in the PJM market or seeks other opportunities.

"Pennsylvania is the nation's second largest energy producer, yet the priorities of Pennsylvania's families are not being adequately considered as our state continues to supplement the increasing energy demands of the region," he wrote.

Other PJM legislation

New Jersey recently enacted a law requiring utilities to explain their votes on matters decided by PJM and direct the state Board of Public Utilities to consider alternatives to PJM such as creating a multi-state compact, creating an independent grid or joining another one.

The Democratic-controlled Pennsylvania House approved House Bill 1599 sponsored by Rep. Chris Rabb, D-Philadelphia, by a 159-43 vote last July to require utilities to disclose votes on PJM actions.

HB1599 is before the Senate Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure Committee.

Robert Swift is a reporter for Capitol/Wire State Affairs Pennsylvania. Reach him at rswift@stateaffairs.com