

House File 2284 - Introduced

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BY GOLDING, THOMPSON, LARSON,
and THOMSON

A BILL FOR

1 An Act relating to wind turbine inspections, and providing
2 penalties.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

unofficial

1 Section 1. NEW SECTION. **476.53B Wind turbine inspections.**

2 1. The purpose of this section is to establish routine
3 inspection requirements for wind turbines in Iowa to ensure the
4 safety, efficiency, and compliance with state standards. These
5 measures aim to prevent accidents, protect public safety, and
6 promote responsible renewable energy generation in the state.

7 2. As used in this section:

8 a. "Inspection" means a systematic process of evaluating
9 the condition of a wind turbine, including its structural,
10 mechanical, and electrical components.

11 b. "Qualified inspector" means a professional who meets
12 training, experience, and examination standards in the field of
13 wind turbine inspection and maintenance.

14 c. "Wind turbine" means a mechanical device that converts the
15 kinetic energy from wind into electricity and has a nameplate
16 generating capacity greater than one hundred kilowatts.

17 3. a. All wind turbines in Iowa shall be inspected by a
18 qualified inspector at least once every twelve months. The
19 inspection must include a detailed assessment of the wind
20 turbine's structural, mechanical, electrical, and safety systems,
21 including all the following:

22 (1) Blade condition and wear.

23 (2) Tower integrity.

24 (3) Gearbox and electrical components.

25 (4) Safety features, including brakes and emergency shut-off
26 systems.

27 (5) Maintenance history.

28 b. In the event of any significant operational anomaly,
29 safety concern, or after extreme weather events, including
30 lightning, an additional inspection shall be conducted within
31 seventy-two hours of the event by a qualified inspector.

32 c. Within thirty days of each inspection required under
33 paragraph "a" or "b", the wind turbine operator must submit a
34 wind turbine inspection report to the commission. The report
35 must include all of the following:

1 (1) Findings of the inspection, including any deficiencies or
2 necessary repairs.

3 (2) Documentation of any corrective actions taken or plans to
4 address deficiencies.

5 (3) Certification of compliance with applicable state and
6 federal safety standards.

7 d. If any safety concerns are identified during the
8 inspection, the wind turbine operator must halt operation of the
9 wind turbine and correct any issues within ninety days after
10 the submission of the inspection report. If correction of the
11 issues requires more than ninety days, the operator must submit
12 a detailed timeline and plan for the resolution of the issues to
13 the commission.

14 4. a. A wind turbine operator who fails to conduct an
15 inspection required under subsection 3 shall be subject to a
16 civil penalty of no more than five thousand dollars per turbine
17 per inspection period.

18 b. A wind turbine operator who fails to submit an inspection
19 report to the commission within thirty days of an inspection, as
20 required under subsection 3, paragraph "c", shall be subject to a
21 civil penalty of no more than two thousand dollars.

22 c. A wind turbine operator in violation of subsection 3,
23 paragraph "d", is subject to a civil penalty of up to ten
24 thousand dollars per turbine.

25 d. A wind turbine operator who repeatedly fails to comply
26 with the inspection and maintenance requirements under subsection
27 3 is subject to increased penalties or suspension of operation
28 of any noncompliant wind turbines at the discretion of the
29 commission.

30 5. a. The commission shall be responsible for the
31 administration and enforcement of this section, including
32 the inspection frequency, compliance reporting, and penalty
33 assessments.

34 b. The commission may conduct random audits of wind turbine
35 inspections and reports to verify compliance.

1 c. The commission shall maintain a public database of
2 wind turbine inspections, including inspection dates, findings,
3 corrective actions, and compliance status.

4 6. This section applies to all wind turbine operators and
5 wind energy conversion facilities, as defined in section 476C.1,
6 within the state of Iowa.

7 EXPLANATION

8 The inclusion of this explanation does not constitute agreement with
9 the explanation's substance by the members of the general assembly.

10 This bill relates to wind turbine inspections.

11 The bill creates a new Code section with the purpose of
12 establishing routine inspection requirements for wind turbines to
13 ensure safety, efficiency, and compliance with state standards in
14 order to prevent accidents, protect public safety, and promote
15 responsible renewable energy generation.

16 The bill requires all wind turbines in the state to be
17 inspected by a qualified inspector at least once every 12
18 months. The inspection must include an assessment of structural,
19 mechanical, electrical, and safety systems. The bill also
20 requires an additional inspection within 72 hours following
21 a significant operational anomaly, safety concern, or extreme
22 weather event, including lightning.

23 The bill requires a wind turbine operator to submit an
24 inspection report to the Iowa utilities commission (commission)
25 within 30 days of each required inspection. The report
26 must include the findings of the inspection, documentation
27 of corrective actions taken or planned, and certification of
28 compliance with applicable state and federal safety standards.
29 If an inspection identifies safety concerns, the bill requires
30 the operator to halt operation of the wind turbine and to correct
31 the issues within 90 days after submission of the inspection
32 report. If correction will require more than 90 days, the
33 operator must submit a detailed timeline and plan for resolving
34 the issues to the commission.

35 The bill establishes civil penalties for noncompliance with

1 inspection requirements. An operator who fails to conduct a
2 required inspection is subject to a civil penalty of up to
3 \$5,000 per turbine per inspection period. An operator who
4 fails to timely submit an inspection report is subject to a
5 civil penalty of up to \$2,000. An operator who fails to
6 properly address identified safety concerns is subject to a
7 civil penalty of up to \$10,000 per turbine. The bill further
8 authorizes increased penalties or suspension of turbine operation
9 for repeated violations, at the discretion of the commission.
10 The bill authorizes the commission to administer and enforce
11 the bill, including oversight of inspection frequency, reporting
12 compliance, and penalty assessments. The bill authorizes the
13 commission to conduct random audits of inspection reports to
14 verify compliance and requires the commission to maintain a
15 public database containing wind turbine inspection information.
16 The bill provides that the inspection and enforcement
17 requirements apply to all wind turbine operators and wind energy
18 conversion facilities within the state.