



**Media Release**

**For Immediate Release**

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**Tri-City Regional Chamber Board of Directors Votes to Approve Energy Independence Act Resolution**

**TRI-CITIES, WA** — Tri-City Regional Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors has voted to support a resolution supporting House Bill 2124 and Senate Bill 5964 that narrows the requirement for utilities to purchase renewable energy resources or renewable energy credits when not needed to serve customer loads. Board members approved the vote September 21<sup>st</sup> during the regularly scheduled monthly Board of Directors meeting.

Currently, Initiative 937 passed in 2006 resulting in the Energy Independence Act (EIA). The EIA required qualifying utilities to incrementally increase the amount of eligible renewable resources to 15 percent by 2020, and to pursue all cost-effective conservation requirements starting in 2010. The Initiative narrowly defined eligible renewable resources and excluded existing hydropower, a clean renewable resource supplying over two-thirds of the electricity in the state of Washington.

Initiative 937 failed in Benton County with 66 percent of the voters opposing the Initiative, failed in Franklin County with 67 percent of the voters opposing the Initiative and statewide passing by only 51.6 percent. In August, Benton and Franklin PUD's announced their energy demands are not growing as projected or have declined due to the combination of successful conservation programs and the poor economy. The EIA requires qualifying utilities to purchase specific qualified renewable energy resources or renewable energy credits even if the utilities don't need additional power.

House Bill 2124 and Senate Bill 5964 provide qualifying utilities the choice to avoid the purchase of unneeded renewable energy or renewable energy credits, and do not change the overall intent of Initiative 937, which is to encourage the use of conservation and the use of renewable energy resources.

For more information:

Contact: Jens Lee, Marketing and Membership Director

[jens.lee@tricityregionalchamber.com](mailto:jens.lee@tricityregionalchamber.com)

509.736.0510