

LONGMONT DAILY TIMES-CALL

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The Daily Times-Call*

DENVER — Gov. Bill Owens blocked 12 more bills from becoming law Friday, taking his vetoes tally from the Legislature's 2006 session to 44.

That total could grow, because Owens has through Wednesday to sign or veto a number of bills still awaiting his consideration.

Friday's vetoes included six bills sponsored by Northern Colorado lawmakers: three from Boulder Democratic Rep. Alice Madden, two from Longmont Democratic Sen. Brandon Shaffer and one from Nederland Democratic Rep. Tom Plant and Larimer County Republican Sen. Steve Johnson.

House Bill 1147, the Plant-Johnson measure, would have directed the Public Utilities Commission to come up with rules requiring natural gas distributors to adopt conservation and energy-efficiency programs.

Owens objected in his veto message that by allowing utilities to recover the programs' costs through rate increases, HB1147 would cost each residential customer \$6 annually and each business customer more than \$22 a year.

"Colorado customers have seen their heating costs triple over the past three years," Owens wrote. "I believe passing on these additional costs is improper at this time."

Another energy-related bill falling to Owens' veto pen was House Majority Leader Madden's House Bill 1317, which would have allocated \$316,000 to the Energy and Environmental Security Initiative at the University of Colorado School of Law.

The money was intended to create an annual Colorado Energy Profile with statistics, data and analyses about the supply, production, generation, transmission, distribution and consumption of Colorado's energy resources.

Much of that information already is available from various state and federal agencies, Owens said, adding that he has directed the Colorado Office of Energy Management and Conservation to solicit private proposals for creation of a Web site to make the information available to the public.

Madden, however, said in a Friday statement that "the Colorado School of Mines and the University of Colorado agreed this information needs to be available on a statewide public basis, and it's appropriate that the research be compiled by public policy-neutral entities.

"I disagree with the approach the governor has taken because I believe public access to this information is the key to securing a sustainable energy future for Colorado," Madden said.