Rep. Dianda offered the following resolution:

House Resolution No. 136.

A resolution to urge the Governor and Department of Corrections to convert heating plants at the state's correctional facilities to combined heat and power plants.

Whereas, Corrections facilities are big consumers of electricity, as they account for nearly 45 percent of the electricity used by all state facilities. In 2012, Corrections facilities consumed nearly 172 million kilowatt hours of electricity at a cost of almost $15 million. Nine of the facilities in the corrections system operate heating plants on-site to meet the heating and cooling needs of multiple buildings. The nine facilities with on-site heating plants collectively account for nearly 50 percent of the Department's annual electricity use, which presents an opportunity for substantial savings from more efficient delivery of utilities. The combination of existing heating capacity and electricity demand make these facilities ideal candidates for new cogeneration projects; and

Whereas, The Department of Corrections is responding to the legislature's demand to complete energy utilization assessments and implement energy savings initiatives in the last two state budgets. Their efforts look promising as recent reports suggest early reductions in electricity use at G. Robert Cotton Correctional Facility of nearly 12 percent. Still, the Department needs to think more broadly at what can be accomplished to reduce utility use and look to the example of other state department efforts to dramatically reduce costs; and

Whereas, A cogeneration conversion project implemented at the state secondary complex achieved dramatic reductions in utility use and ultimately costs. Electricity, heat, and air conditioning are now being provided through a cogeneration system fired by natural gas, a cleaner burning fuel. New, high-efficiency gas turbines producing 1.2 megawatts of electricity were installed at the complex. The co-benefit of the system is the production of steam that is used to heat the facility in the winter and operate chillers in the summer to cool the facility. The energy efficient cogeneration system displaced old, inefficient boilers used for heating and cooling as well as the need to buy electricity off the grid. In all, the state expects to save $1.6 million per year in reduced utility costs with a payoff on investment in less than 8 years. This is from a facility that is a much smaller energy user than the corrections facilities with heating plants; and

Whereas, Making an investment in a cleaner, more efficient, cost-saving technology allows the state to demonstrate leadership and a sense of urgency in managing taxpayer investments in our state. Switching to a cleaner burning fuel will help the state reduce emissions of sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, and mercury and reduce our carbon foot-print. Installing more efficient technologies will help the state meet utility needs by consuming less energy. Reducing energy use will produce much needed savings in the Department of Corrections budget and free-up resources for other state spending priorities; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That we urge the Governor and Department of Corrections to convert power plants at the state's correctional facilities to combined heat and power, also known as cogeneration plants to reduce pollutant emissions and to save the state millions of dollars in utility costs over the equipment's lifespan; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the Office of the Governor and Director of the Department of Corrections.