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**SENATE BILL 6479**

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**State of Washington 64th Legislature 2016 Regular Session**

**By** Senators Chase, Brown, McCoy, Ericksen, Ranker, Carlyle, Frockt, Schoesler, Conway, Roach, Honeyford, Hasegawa, and McAuliffe

AN ACT Relating to the establishment of a joint select committee to investigate the creation of a Washington state council for the Pacific Northwest economic region; creating a new section; and providing an expiration date.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1)(a) A legislative joint select committee on the creation of a Washington state council for the Pacific Northwest economic region is established, with members as provided in this subsection.

(i) The president of the senate shall appoint two members from each of the two largest caucuses of the senate.

(ii) The speaker of the house of representatives shall appoint two members from each of the two largest caucuses of the house of representatives.

(b) The committee shall choose its chair from among its membership.

(2) The joint select committee shall review the costs and benefits of creating a Washington state council for the Pacific Northwest economic region and investigate possible avenues to expand cross-border partnership on substantive issues such as:

(a) Sewage treatment and disposal by Victoria, British Columbia;

(b) Customs preclearance for cruise ships, railroads, and frequent travelers;

(c) Workforce and professional license reciprocity;

(d) Invasive species;

(e) Mining;

(f) International trade agreements, harmonization, and good neighbor agreements;

(g) Expanding tourism;

(h) Energy and environmental challenges;

(i) Regional carbon and low carbon economy matters;

(j) The Columbia river treaty;

(k) Railroads;

(l) The establishment of regular joint cabinet meetings between regional entities; and

(m) Relations between states, tribes, and provinces.

(3) The joint select committee shall meet:

(a) Either three or four times in 2016, with each meeting in one of the following areas within Washington state and no more than one meeting in each area: Vancouver; Spokane; the Tri-Cities; and Bellingham or Seattle;

(b) Once with counterparts in British Columbia; and

(c) Once together with Pacific Northwest economic region colleagues from Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, and Montana.

(4) The joint select committee shall create and consult an advisory committee of stakeholders to assist in the development of recommendations under this section. Members of such advisory committee are appointed by the chair of the joint select committee.

(5) Staff support for the joint select committee must be provided by the senate committee services and the house of representatives office of program research.

(6) Legislative members of the joint select committee are reimbursed for travel expenses in accordance with RCW 44.04.120. Nonlegislative members are not entitled to be reimbursed for travel expenses if they are elected officials or are participating on behalf of an employer, governmental entity, or other organization. Any reimbursement for other nonlegislative members is subject to chapter 43.03 RCW.

(7) The expenses of the joint select committee must be paid jointly by the senate and the house of representatives. Committee expenditures are subject to approval by the senate facilities and operations committee and the house of representatives executive rules committee, or their successor committees.

(8) The joint select committee shall report its findings and recommendations to the appropriate committees of the legislature by December 31, 2016.

(9) This section expires December 31, 2016.

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