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**SENATE BILL 6618**

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**State of Washington                      54th Legislature                      1996 Regular Session**

**By Senators Snyder, McDonald, Rinehart and West**

Read first time 01/19/96. Referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

1            AN ACT Relating to the measurement of state fiscal conditions and  
2 economic performance; adding a new chapter to Title 82 RCW; and  
3 creating a new section.

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

5            NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 1.** The citizens of Washington should enjoy a  
6 high quality of life and economic prosperity. To achieve this goal,  
7 the legislature recognizes that the state must compete economically at  
8 a national and international level. It is critical to the economic  
9 well-being of the citizens of this state that the legislature strive to  
10 continually improve the state's economic climate. Therefore, the  
11 legislature intends to provide a mechanism whereby the information  
12 necessary to achieve this goal is available on a timely basis.

13            NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 2.** (1) The economic climate council is hereby  
14 created.

15            (2) The council shall select a series of no more than ten  
16 benchmarks that characterize the competitive environment of the state.  
17 The benchmarks should be indicators of the cost of doing business; the  
18 education and skills of the work force; a sound infrastructure; and the

1 quality of life. In selecting the appropriate benchmarks, the council  
2 shall use the following criteria:

3 (a) The availability of comparative information for other states  
4 and countries;

5 (b) The timeliness with which benchmark information can be  
6 obtained; and

7 (c) The ability to forecast changes in the benchmarks based on  
8 proposed legislative actions.

9 The council shall report to the legislature by September 30, 1996,  
10 on the benchmarks selected under this subsection.

11 (3) Twice each year the council shall prepare an official state  
12 economic climate report based on changes in the benchmarks. The  
13 reports shall include current benchmark comparisons with other states  
14 and countries; an analysis of factors that may change the competitive  
15 relationships; and to the extent possible, estimates of any future  
16 changes in the benchmarks for a period covering at least the current  
17 and ensuing fiscal biennial periods.

18 (4) The council shall submit reports prepared under this section to  
19 the governor and the fiscal committees of the senate and the house of  
20 representatives on or before March 31st and September 30th of each  
21 year. The first report shall be made by September 30, 1996.

22 (5) All agencies of state government shall provide to the council  
23 immediate access to all information relating to economic climate  
24 reports.

25 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** (1) Until July 1, 1997, the economic and  
26 revenue forecast council shall, in addition to its other duties and  
27 responsibilities, function as the economic climate council created  
28 under section 2 of this act.

29 (2) The staff of the economic and revenue forecast council shall  
30 serve as staff to the economic climate council until July 1, 1997,  
31 working with the support of staff from the fiscal committees of the  
32 senate and the house of representatives.

33 (3) By September 30, 1996, the council shall make recommendations  
34 to the legislature regarding: (a) Permanent composition of the  
35 economic climate council, including the procedures for appointment of  
36 members, length of terms, selection of a chair, and reimbursement for  
37 expenses or other compensation; and (b) a permanent staffing structure  
38 to support the work of the economic climate council.

1        NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 4.**    (1) The council shall create an advisory  
2 committee to assist the council in selecting benchmarks and developing  
3 economic climate reports and benchmarks. The advisory committee shall  
4 consist of no more than seven members. At least two of the members of  
5 the advisory committee shall have experience in and represent business,  
6 and at least two of the members shall have experience in and represent  
7 labor. All of the members of the advisory committee shall have special  
8 expertise and interest in the state's economic climate and competitive  
9 strategies. Appointments to the advisory committee shall be  
10 recommended by the chair of the council and approved by a two-thirds  
11 vote of the council. The chair of the advisory committee shall be  
12 selected by the members of the committee.

13        (2) The advisory committee shall meet as determined by the chair of  
14 the committee until September 30, 1996, and shall meet at least twice  
15 per year thereafter in advance of the economic climate reports due on  
16 March 31st and September 30th of each year.

17        (3) Members of the advisory council shall serve without  
18 compensation but shall be reimbursed for travel expenses in accordance  
19 with RCW 43.03.050 and 43.03.060 while attending meetings of the  
20 advisory committee, sessions of the economic climate council, or on  
21 official business authorized by the council.

22        NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 5.**    Sections 1, 2, and 4 of this act shall  
23 constitute a new chapter in Title 82 RCW.

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