

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6070

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Environmental Quality & Water Resources, March 2, 1999

Title: An act relating to studying global climate change.

Brief Description: Studying the effects of climate change.

Sponsors: Senator Fraser.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Environmental Quality & Water Resources: 3/2/99 [DP-WM, DNP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY & WATER RESOURCES

Majority Report: Do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.
Signed by Senators Fraser, Chair; Eide, Vice Chair; Jacobsen and McAuliffe.

Minority Report: Do not pass.
Signed by Senators Honeyford, Morton and Swecker.

Staff: Richard Ramsey (786-7412)

Background: The earth's climate is highly variable. In the last 20,000 years the planet has experienced the warmest and the coldest periods in the last two million years. Effects of the extremes of climate change include the greatest expanse of continental ice sheets at approximately 18,000 years ago to a substantial melting of the polar ice caps and sea levels 300 feet higher than today approximately 7,000 years ago.

While the causes of global climate disruption are debated, there is a growing consensus among scientists that human activities are influencing climate. In addition, there is considerable evidence suggesting a warming in the earth's planet over the last 100 years.

Summary of Bill: The Institute for Public Policy is directed to study the potential effects of global climate change on the Pacific Northwest and Washington. A committee is established to advise the Institute in its conduct of the study. The committee consists of four members of the House of Representatives, four members of the Senate, four members of the public appointed by the Governor, and a representative of University of Washington's research institute addressing the impacts of climate change.

The Institute will cooperate with private and public universities and state agencies that have expertise and understanding related to the potential effects of climate change.

An interim report is due to the Legislature in January 2000 and a final report is due before the 2001 legislative session.

Appropriation: \$100,000.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: This is a valuable study that complements efforts by organizations such as Audubon and some state agencies.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Ron Shultz, Audubon (pro).