
SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 6308

State of Washington

60th Legislature

2008 Regular Session

By Senate Water, Energy & Telecommunications (originally sponsored by Senators Rockefeller, Regala, Murray, Kohl-Welles, Marr, Pridemore, Oemig, Kilmer, Jacobsen, Kline, Shin, and McAuliffe)

READ FIRST TIME 02/04/08.

1 AN ACT Relating to climate change research, preparation, and
2 adaptation; and adding a new chapter to Title 43 RCW.

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

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) While significant efforts to reduce the
5 rate of climate change are underway in the state and throughout the
6 nation, significant adverse impacts are likely inevitable over the
7 course of the twenty-first century. Therefore it is in the public
8 interest for Washington state to be actively working to both mitigate
9 the effects of climate change as well as to prepare for the impacts
10 that cannot be avoided. While the legislature in chapter 307, Laws of
11 2007, has adopted goals for reducing emissions of climate change gases,
12 and work is underway to establish a comprehensive program to achieve
13 these goals, there is not yet a comprehensive program to coordinate the
14 research and information being compiled on localized impacts of climate
15 change, and to assist local and state entities and the public generally
16 in preparing for and adapting to such impacts.

17 (2) It is the purpose of this chapter to authorize a study that
18 will recommend the elements of such a comprehensive program of climate
19 change research, preparation, and adaptation.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** The definitions in this section apply
2 throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

3 (1) "Department" means the department of ecology.

4 (2) "Institute" means the joint institute for the study of the
5 atmosphere and ocean, within the University of Washington.

6 (3) "Work groups" means preparation and adaptation working groups
7 created under executive order 07-02 and other participants who may be
8 added under section 4 of this act.

9 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** (1) Not later than November 1, 2008, the
10 department shall prepare a report and deliver it to the governor and
11 the climate-related policy and fiscal committees of the senate and
12 house of representatives. The report must contain the department's
13 recommendations for the creation of a comprehensive climate change
14 research, preparation, and adaptation program.

15 (2) The department shall develop the report required in subsection
16 (1) of this section using the work groups efforts on public health,
17 agriculture, the coast line, forestry, and infrastructure as a
18 foundation, and include recommendations for specific steps to prepare
19 for impacts to water resources and management, flood response,
20 protection of ecosystems, and biodiversity, including the protection of
21 threatened or endangered species and species of economic importance to
22 the state.

23 (3) The report must include recommendations for at least the
24 following:

25 (a) Criteria to establish state-funded research priorities;

26 (b) Methods to ensure data and information systems will be most
27 effective for and accessible to relevant planning jurisdictions and the
28 public generally;

29 (c) Delivering technical and financial assistance to and
30 integrating data and analyses into state and local programs and
31 planning;

32 (d) Funding that may be needed by local, regional, state, and other
33 planning jurisdictions to incorporate climate change into their
34 planning processes, including requirements for such integration when
35 receiving state funding;

36 (e) The range of time horizons and geographic scales to be
37 addressed in climate impact research and analysis;

1 (f) Phasing in implementation of the program in the 2009-2011
2 biennium, including funding and legislation necessary to implement each
3 component of this initial phase; and

4 (g) Any specific projects or pilot projects that the work groups
5 and the institute have identified to ensure the state is adequately
6 prepared for the impacts of climate change and the necessary funding
7 for those projects or pilot projects.

8 (4) In developing the report required under subsection (1) of this
9 section, the department shall, in consultation with the institute, use
10 the comprehensive state climate change assessment prepared under
11 section 404, chapter 348, Laws of 2007, and the reports prepared by the
12 work groups. The department shall make both reports and the report
13 required under subsection (1) of this section available to the public
14 and ensure they are available on the department's web site or otherwise
15 widely disseminated.

16 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** In preparing the report required under
17 section 3 of this act, the department shall consider if other private,
18 public, or tribal interests who may be impacted by the recommendations
19 of the report or by the specific impacts of climate change being
20 considered by the work groups are represented and shall invite those
21 interests to participate. The department shall include in its report
22 a list of interests represented in the work groups and which interests
23 were invited but did not participate. In order to allow for broad
24 participation by all areas of the state, the department shall hold as
25 many meetings as possible by teleconference, video conference, or other
26 means that do not require travel.

27 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** (1) The office of Washington state
28 climatologist is created within the University of Washington.

29 (2) The office of Washington state climatologist consists of the
30 director of the office, who is the state climatologist, and appropriate
31 staff and administrative support as necessary to carry out the powers
32 and duties of the office as enumerated in this section.

33 (3) The director of the office must be appointed by the president
34 of the University of Washington.

35 (4) The office of Washington state climatologist has the following
36 powers and duties:

1 (a) To serve as a credible and expert source of climate and weather
2 information for state and local decision makers and agencies working on
3 drought, flooding, climate change, and other related issues;

4 (b) To gather and disseminate, and where practicable archive, in
5 the most cost-effective manner possible, all climate and weather
6 information that is or could be of value to policy and decision makers
7 in the state;

8 (c) To act as the representative of the state in all climatological
9 and meteorological matters, both within and outside of the state, when
10 requested by the legislative or executive branches of the state
11 government;

12 (d) To prepare, publish, and disseminate climate summaries for
13 those individuals, agencies, and organizations whose activities are
14 related to the welfare of the state and are affected by climate and
15 weather;

16 (e) To supply critical information for drought preparedness and
17 emergency response as needed to implement the state's drought
18 contingency response plan maintained by the department under RCW
19 43.83B.410, and to serve as a member of the state's drought water
20 supply and emergency response committees as may be formed in response
21 to a drought event;

22 (f) To conduct and report on studies of climate and weather
23 phenomena of significant socioeconomic importance to the state; and

24 (g) To evaluate the significance of natural and man-made changes in
25 important features of the climate affecting the state, and to report
26 this information to those agencies and organizations in the state who
27 are likely to be affected by these changes.

28 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** (1) Sections 1 through 5 of this act
29 constitute a new chapter in Title 43 RCW.

30 (2) If chapter --- ([House] [Senate] Bill No. ---), Laws of 2008
31 becomes law and is codified as a new chapter in Title 43 RCW, sections
32 1 through 5 of this act shall be codified in the same new chapter in
33 Title 43 RCW.

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