
SENATE BILL 5636

State of Washington

54th Legislature

1995 Regular Session

By Senators Fraser and Rasmussen

Read first time 01/30/95. Referred to Committee on Senate Select
Committee on Water Policy.

1 AN ACT Relating to the creation of the Washington water resources
2 commission; adding new sections to chapter 90.54 RCW; adding new
3 sections to chapter 43.131 RCW; creating a new section; providing an
4 effective date; and declaring an emergency.

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

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** FINDINGS AND INTENT. The legislature finds
7 that it is in the best interests of all state citizens to achieve a
8 comprehensive state water resources program through the development of
9 regional plans devised by all interests working cooperatively within
10 the watersheds to which the plans will be addressed. To achieve this
11 result will require a lengthy period of time and substantial fiscal and
12 human resources in the pursuit of numerous regional plans ongoing
13 simultaneously. The state has a responsibility to ensure the
14 coordination and integration of such planning and the wise expenditure
15 of state funds to assist in such planning. For these reasons the
16 legislature finds that a state-level entity comprised of a
17 geographically diverse membership representing the broad spectrum of
18 interests in Washington's water resources should be created to provide
19 guidance and oversight to regional water resource planning, to ensure

1 the timely and efficient implementation of adopted plans, and to advise
2 the governor and legislature on actions needed to improve regional plan
3 development and implementation.

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** COMMISSION CREATED. (1) There is created
5 the Washington water resources commission. The commission shall be
6 comprised of thirteen members as follows:

7 (a) A chair of the commission appointed by the governor;

8 (b) Eight members, appointed by the governor, to represent the
9 following interests:

10 (i) Indian tribal governments;

11 (ii) Local government;

12 (iii) Federal government;

13 (iv) State government;

14 (v) Agriculture and silviculture;

15 (vi) Business;

16 (vii) Fisheries and wildlife;

17 (viii) Environment and recreation;

18 (c) Two members who serve in the house of representatives,
19 appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives; and

20 (d) Two members of the senate, appointed by the president of the
21 senate.

22 (2) The members appointed by the governor shall serve four-year
23 terms, except that three of the initial appointees by the governor
24 shall serve for a two-year term and three other of the initial
25 appointees by the governor shall serve for a three-year term. The
26 terms of the initial members shall begin October 1, 1995. No less than
27 four members appointed under subsection (1) (a) and (b) of this section
28 shall reside east of the crest of the Cascade mountains.

29 (3) Persons having expertise and experience in water resources
30 planning and management shall be qualified for appointment to the
31 board. For appointments under subsection (1)(b) of this section, the
32 member shall have demonstrated active involvement in water resource
33 management and planning activities to further the water-related
34 interests of the position described. In making appointments the
35 governor shall give strong consideration to recommendations of the
36 respective caucus members serving on the water resources forum.

37 (4) The appointments made under subsection (1) (a) and (b) of this
38 section shall be subject to confirmation by the senate.

1 (5) In making appointments under subsection (1) (c) and (d) of this
2 section, the speaker of the house of representatives and president of
3 the senate shall appoint one member from each body who resides east of
4 the Cascade crest and one who resides west of the Cascade crest.

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** DUTIES OF THE COMMISSION. (1) The principal
6 duty of the commission shall be to guide the state involvement in and
7 assistance to regional water resource planning efforts authorized by
8 this chapter. In carrying out this duty the commission shall:

9 (a) Establish guidelines and procedures for the review and approval
10 of petitions to initiate regional planning;

11 (b) Review and approve petitions to initiate regional planning;

12 (c) Award and administer grants to regional planning groups to
13 assist in conducting regional planning;

14 (d) Coordinate the participation of state agencies in regional
15 planning and the provision of technical assistance and water resources
16 data and information by state agencies to regional planning groups;

17 (e) Review and approve regional plans;

18 (f) Ensure the timely implementation of approved plans by
19 coordinating state agency implementing actions and making
20 recommendations to the governor and the legislature for budget and
21 policy legislation necessary for implementation, considering all
22 regional plan recommendations as provided in subsection (2) of this
23 section;

24 (g) Monitor the progress in implementation of regional plans and
25 make periodic reports to the governor and the legislature on the status
26 of regional planning and plan implementation.

27 (2)(a) The commission shall serve as a state-level review entity to
28 provide recommendations to the governor and to the legislature on
29 budgetary and legislative actions appropriate to implement the
30 recommendations of the several regional plans as they are developed.
31 In this function, the commission shall attempt to reconcile duplicative
32 or conflicting recommendations with the goal of developing
33 recommendations that provide for geographic variation and that are in
34 the interests of all citizens of the state.

35 (b) The commission shall provide timely information to the governor
36 and legislature on the plans submitted for state approval and receiving
37 approval, and the elements of plans requiring state adoption of rules
38 and budgetary or legislative action necessary for implementation. To

1 accomplish this duty, the commission shall summarize all plan elements
2 and recommendations submitted to the state on or before the first of
3 November of each year and provide a report each year to the governor
4 and the appropriate standing committees of the legislature no later
5 than December 1st. The report shall contain recommendations for
6 legislative action to implement the plans consistently with other
7 regional plans and the state's comprehensive water resources program.

8 (3) The commission shall also timely review and make
9 recommendations upon such water resources problems or issues as the
10 governor or the legislature may refer to the commission.

11 (4) The commission shall facilitate the communication of
12 information and views among all interests in Washington water
13 resources. To accomplish this duty the commission shall hold a public
14 forum at least twice annually in which water resource topics of broad
15 public import are scheduled for discussion and to which invitations are
16 broadly disseminated to all interests. The commission shall seek
17 geographic diversity in the location of such forums. A summary of the
18 forum proceedings shall be included in the annual report required under
19 subsection (2) of this section.

20 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** COMMISSION PROCEDURES. (1) The chair of the
21 commission shall schedule an initial, organizational meeting of the
22 commission no later than November 1, 1995. At the initial meeting the
23 commission shall adopt procedures for performing its duties, including
24 the method for making decisions. The commission is authorized to
25 appoint an executive committee consisting of the chair and no less than
26 three members. The executive committee shall have such powers as are
27 authorized by the commission. However, the executive committee shall
28 not have authority to make final decisions to approve or reject a
29 petition to commence regional planning, to approve or reject a proposed
30 regional plan, or to make an award of state financial assistance for
31 regional planning.

32 (2) The commission may form ad hoc policy and technical advisory
33 committees.

34 (3) Commission members shall be compensated in accordance with RCW
35 43.03.250 and shall receive reimbursement for their travel expenses as
36 provided in RCW 43.03.050 and 43.03.060.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** COMMISSION POWERS. The commission shall
2 have the authority to:

3 (1) Hire a staff director, who shall hire such additional staff as
4 is necessary to assist the commission in carrying out its duties. The
5 commission may enter interagency agreements with other agencies
6 assigning employees to the commission. State agencies participating in
7 providing assistance to regional planning efforts are directed to work
8 with the commission in providing employees and other resources to
9 assist the commission;

10 (2) Enter into contracts to assist in carrying out its duties;

11 (3) Expend funds appropriated to the commission for its operations,
12 for the provision of financial assistance to regional planning, and for
13 such other purposes as the legislature may provide; and

14 (4) Receive gifts, grants, loans, or other moneys made available to
15 the commission.

16 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** A new section is added to chapter 43.131 RCW
17 to read as follows:

18 The Washington water resources commission and its powers and duties
19 shall be terminated on June 30, 2001, as provided in section 7 of this
20 act.

21 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 7.** A new section is added to chapter 43.131 RCW
22 to read as follows:

23 The following acts or parts of acts, as now existing or hereafter
24 amended, are each repealed, effective June 30, 2002:

25 (1) Section 1 of this act;

26 (2) Section 2 of this act;

27 (3) Section 3 of this act;

28 (4) Section 4 of this act; and

29 (5) Section 5 of this act.

30 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 8.** CAPTIONS. Captions as used in this act
31 constitute no part of the law.

32 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 9.** CODIFICATION. Sections 1 through 5 of this
33 act are each added to chapter 90.54 RCW.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 10.** EFFECTIVE DATE. This act is necessary for
2 the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or
3 support of the state government and its existing public institutions,
4 and shall take effect July 1, 1995.

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