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SENATE BILL 6854

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State of Washington

56th Legislature

2000 Regular Session

By Senator Fraser

Read first time 02/17/2000. Referred to Committee on Environmental Quality & Water Resources.

1 AN ACT Relating to addressing the impacts of climate change; and  
2 creating new sections.

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

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that:

5 (1) There are a growing number of scientific reports on increases  
6 in atmospheric concentrations of gases such as carbon dioxide and their  
7 impact on the earth's climate system;

8 (2) Much of the research to date on climate change takes a global  
9 perspective, while much less information is available on potential  
10 climate change impacts to smaller regions such as Washington state and  
11 the Pacific Northwest;

12 (3) Regional climate changes may have a number of major impacts on  
13 the economy and the public health and safety of Washington and the  
14 Pacific Northwest; and

15 (4) The citizens and businesses of Washington will be better able  
16 to plan for and adjust to any such changes if the legislature  
17 undertakes an effort to determine whether climate changes have  
18 occurred, to identify what the regional climate changes are likely to

1 be, and propose how citizens and businesses can plan for, mitigate, or  
2 take advantage of these impending climate changes.

3 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1) There is created a joint select  
4 committee on climate change. The committee shall be comprised of  
5 twelve members of the house of representatives, six from each caucus,  
6 selected by the co-speakers of the house of representatives, and twelve  
7 members of the senate, six from each caucus, selected by the president  
8 of the senate. In making appointments to this joint select committee,  
9 the co-speakers shall select two members, one from each caucus, from  
10 the technology, telecommunications and energy, agriculture and ecology,  
11 natural resources, commerce and labor, and financial institutions and  
12 insurance committees, and from the membership at large. The president  
13 shall select two members, one from each caucus, from the energy,  
14 technology and telecommunications, agriculture and rural economic  
15 development, natural resources, parks and recreation, commerce, trade,  
16 housing, and financial institutions, and the environmental quality and  
17 water resources committees, and from the membership at large.  
18 Committee members shall select from among themselves a committee chair  
19 and vice-chair.

20 (2) The joint select committee shall survey the current state of  
21 the science regarding global climate change and associated regional  
22 climate change. The committee shall identify steps that the public and  
23 private sectors may make to plan for, mitigate, or take advantage of  
24 the effects of climate change. The committee shall also identify key  
25 areas of uncertainty and opportunities for future research. The  
26 committee's efforts shall include, but not be limited to, consideration  
27 of the following:

28 (a) Possible alterations to the hydrologic cycle, including changes  
29 in the quantity and the timing of snowfall and snowpack, rainfall,  
30 runoff, peak flows, low flows, and flooding incidences;

31 (b) Possible changes to energy supply should changes in the timing  
32 and quantity of runoff lead to changes in hydropower production  
33 capabilities and to energy demand in response to potentially warmer  
34 winters and hotter summers;

35 (c) Possible changes to the state's capability to produce  
36 agricultural commodities due to changes in temperature and  
37 precipitation patterns, growing seasons, availability and timing of

1 flows for irrigation, and crop response to increased levels of carbon  
2 dioxide;

3 (d) Possible alterations to the state's capability to produce  
4 forest products, due to changes in temperature, precipitation, and  
5 increased carbon dioxide availability, as well as to changes in species  
6 mix, and changes related to seedling establishment and regeneration;

7 (e) Possible impacts to the state's freshwater, marine, and  
8 salmonid fisheries, including effects of changes in lake and stream  
9 temperatures, changes in the quantity and timing of flows for fish, and  
10 changes in river and estuarine habitat due to sea level rise and  
11 changes in flooding incidences;

12 (f) Possible impacts to coastal areas and communities due to  
13 changes in sea level, changes in frequency and intensity of storms and  
14 storm surges, changes in flooding potential, and changes to coastal  
15 erosion rates and rates of saltwater intrusion into freshwater  
16 aquifers;

17 (g) Possible risks to human health and safety, including health  
18 effects associated with air and water quality changes, changes in  
19 disease patterns, and changes to drinking water availability and  
20 coastal communities associated with sea level rise; and

21 (h) An inventory of existing research efforts and funding sources,  
22 and an identification of important research subjects not currently  
23 being addressed.

24 (3) The committee shall also identify policies in place in the  
25 state that either enhance or discourage economic development  
26 opportunities for Washington companies engaged in energy efficiency and  
27 renewable energy resource industries and shall make recommendations on  
28 any policy changes needed to encourage these industries.

29 (4) In accomplishing subsections (2) and (3) of this section, the  
30 committee shall solicit input from higher education faculty members and  
31 other knowledgeable parties in the public, private, and public-interest  
32 sectors.

33 (5) Staffing for the committee shall be provided by senate  
34 committee services and house of representatives office of program  
35 research.

36 (6) The committee shall report its findings and recommendations to  
37 the legislature by December 1, 2000.

1 (7) The committee expires June 1, 2001.

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