
SENATE BILL 5237

State of Washington 60th Legislature 2007 Regular Session

By Senators Poulsen, Honeyford, Kohl-Welles and Keiser

Read first time 01/15/2007. Referred to Committee on Water, Energy & Telecommunications.

1 AN ACT Relating to the purchase of carbon credits from entities
2 that remove methane from the environment; adding a new section to
3 chapter 43.19 RCW; and creating a new section.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that methane (CH₄) is
6 a potent greenhouse gas that is twenty times more effective than carbon
7 dioxide in trapping heat in the atmosphere. Reducing methane
8 emissions, therefore, is an effective means to reduce climate warming.
9 The legislature also finds that about sixty percent of global methane
10 emissions are human-influenced sources, such as dairy farms. While the
11 legislature cannot control all sources of human-influenced methane, it
12 can encourage the use of innovative mechanisms to control methane from
13 dairy farms located in the state.

14 The legislature declares that the state should be authorized to
15 purchase carbon credits from dairy farmers in the state as an incentive
16 for them to pursue appropriate measures to control dairy nutrients and
17 their concomitant methane emissions from the environment. By offering
18 this financial incentive, the state may enable dairy farmers to finance
19 the development of anaerobic digesters and to produce electricity at a

1 price that may meet the avoided cost of local utilities, thus
2 benefiting dairy operations, the environment, and the need for cost-
3 effective electricity.

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 43.19 RCW
5 to read as follows:

6 (1) Subject to availability of amounts appropriated for this
7 specific purpose, the department of general administration shall
8 purchase at a negotiated price available carbon credits from a person,
9 firm, or corporation that removes methane from the environment by the
10 generation of electricity from biogas in facilities that begin
11 commercial operation after the effective date of this section.

12 (2) The department shall retire and not resell the credits.

13 (3) The definitions in this subsection apply throughout this
14 section unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

15 (a) "Biogas" means the gas primarily composed of methane that is
16 produced in the state from the anaerobic decomposition of organic
17 matter derived from dairy cows in the state.

18 (b) "Carbon credit" means a credit for the verified reduction in
19 the carbon dioxide equivalent of methane, and that is registered with
20 a state, national, or international trading authority or exchange
21 selected by the department of community, trade, and economic
22 development or the Washington climate and rural energy development
23 center.

24 (c) "Carbon dioxide equivalent" has the same meaning as in RCW
25 80.70.010.

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