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**SECOND SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 2000**

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**State of Washington 68th Legislature 2024 Regular Session**

**By** House Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives Mena, Berry, Ramel, Low, Walen, Ryu, Timmons, Reed, Cheney, Nance, Cortes, Santos, and Hackney)

AN ACT Relating to renewing Washington's international leadership; amending RCW 43.290.005, 43.290.020, 43.330.065, and 43.15.090; adding new sections to chapter 43.290 RCW; adding a new section to chapter 44.04 RCW; and recodifying RCW 43.330.065.

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

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 43.290 RCW to read as follows:

(1) The office of international relations and protocol shall develop a strategic international engagement plan to guide Washington's international economic development and engagement consistent with RCW 43.290.005. The plan must create a common framework for the state's engagement in international activities, to include: Trade missions, economic development, and interpersonal knowledge exchanges.

(2) The office may consult with entities relevant to Washington's international presence when developing the strategic plan, including: Associate development organizations, business and civic organizations, consular officials, executive and small cabinet agencies, institutions of higher education, immigration and labor organizations, public ports, state offices, and private and nonprofit organizations.

(3) The office may utilize the resources of Results Washington for technical and operational assistance in developing the strategic plan.

(4) The office must complete an initial strategic plan by July 1, 2025. This strategic plan shall undergo periodic review to measure progress and outcomes at least every two and a half years thereafter, and it shall be fully updated at least every five years thereafter.

**Sec.**  RCW 43.290.005 and 1991 c 24 s 1 are each amended to read as follows:

The legislature finds that it is in the public interest to create an office of international relations and protocol in order to: Make international relations and protocol ((~~a broad-based,~~)) focused((~~,~~)) and functional ((~~part of~~)) across state government; provide leadership in state government with respect to international relations and assist the legislature and state elected officials with international issues affecting the state; establish coordinated methods for responding to foreign governments and institutions seeking cooperative activities with and within Washington; coordinate and improve communication and resource sharing among various state offices, agencies, and educational institutions with international programs; develop and promote state policies that increase international ((~~literacy~~)) engagement and cross-cultural understanding among Washington state's citizens; expand Washington state's international cooperation role in ((~~such~~)) vital areas ((~~as the environment, education, science, culture, and sports~~)) of public policy, including but not limited to economic development, trade and industry, and tourism and sports, as well as education, culture, science, and resilience; ((~~establish coordinated methods for responding to the increasing number of inquiries by foreign governments and institutions seeking cooperative activities within Washington state; provide leadership in state government on international relations and assistance to the legislature and state elected officials on international issues affecting the state;~~)) and assist with multistate international efforts((~~; and coordinate and improve communication and resource sharing among various state offices, agencies, and educational institutions with international programs~~)).

It is the purpose of this chapter to bring these functions together in a new office under the office of the governor in order to establish a visible, coordinated, and comprehensive approach to international relations and protocol.

**Sec.**  RCW 43.290.020 and 1991 c 24 s 4 are each amended to read as follows:

The office of international relations and protocol may:

(1) Create ((~~temporary~~)) advisory committees as necessary to ((~~deal with specific international issues~~)) execute its responsibilities. The duration and composition of such advisory committees may be determined by the office. Advisory committee representation may include statewide elected officials from the executive branch, or their designees, as well as representatives of the legislative branch and the judiciary. Representation may also include external organizations such as ((~~the Seattle consular corps,~~)) world affairs councils, public ports, world trade organizations, ((~~private nonprofit organizations dealing with international education or international environmental issues, organizations concerned with international understanding, businesses with experience in international relations, or other organizations deemed appropriate by the director~~)) associate development organizations, business and civic organizations, consular officials, executive and small cabinet agencies, institutions of higher education, immigration and labor organizations, public ports, state offices, and private and nonprofit organizations. The governor, or the governor's designee, shall chair such advisory committees;

(2) In conjunction with the legislative committee on economic development and international relations, designate foreign jurisdictions, such as national governments, subnational governments, and international organizations, as jurisdictions of strategic importance to Washington;

(3) Establish procedures and requirements for operations and expenditures to support and enhance state government partnership and relationships with foreign jurisdictions, particularly those identified as of strategic importance. Such operations and expenditures are intended to strengthen state agency economic development and policy cooperation, enable the implementation of the strategic international engagement plan, as determined by the director, and provide resources for government-to-government engagement, as well as support of inbound and outbound delegations to and from Washington state;

(4) Accept or request grants or gifts from citizens and other private sources to be used to defray the costs of appropriate hosting of foreign dignitaries, including appropriate gift-giving and reciprocal gift-giving, or other activities of the office. The office shall open and maintain a bank account into which it shall deposit all money received under this subsection. Such money and the interest accruing thereon shall not constitute public funds, shall be kept segregated and apart from funds of the state, and shall not be subject to appropriation or allotment by the state or subject to chapter 43.88 RCW.

**Sec.**  RCW 43.330.065 and 2023 c 470 s 2081 are each amended to read as follows:

((~~The department of commerce, in consultation with the office of protocol, the office of the secretary of state, the department of agriculture, and the employment security department[,]~~)) (1) The office of international relations and protocol and the legislative committee on economic development and international relations, in consultation with the department of commerce, the department of agriculture, and other state agencies and offices as appropriate, shall jointly identify up to ((~~fifteen countries~~)) 15 foreign jurisdictions that are of strategic importance to the development and diversification of Washington's international trade relations.

(2) When designating such jurisdictions of strategic importance, the office and committee shall consider factors including:

(a) Existing or potential partnerships in key industrial sectors;

(b) The presence of cultural and people-to-people ties;

(c) The state's economic development priorities and shared interests, consistent with the state strategic international engagement plan;

(d) The presence of international trade offices or other program-based engagement conducted by state agencies; and

(e) Historic or existing bilateral agreements established on a government-to-government basis.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 43.290 RCW to read as follows:

The office of international relations and protocol shall:

(1) Advise and assist the governor, the legislature, and other independently elected officials on international developments that may affect the state;

(2) Establish and build government-to-government relationships between the state, foreign governments, and international organizations;

(3) Coordinate protocol for foreign dignitaries visiting the governor, the legislature, the judiciary, and other state agencies and offices, including the appropriate criteria and procedures for the signing of bilateral agreements by the governor on behalf of the state of Washington;

(4) Advise, coordinate, and support engagement between the state, foreign governments, and international partners;

(5) Establish, in coordination with the office of the premier of British Columbia, an intergovernmental exchange between the state and British Columbia, cochaired by the governor and the premier of British Columbia or their designees, concerning issues of mutual interests;

(6) Designate an international engagement advisory committee to leverage the expertise of the state's international engagement community;

(7) Assist institutions of higher education in implementing programs for international cooperation and student exchange; and

(8) Improve coordination between state government and the Washington tourism marketing authority.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 44.04 RCW to read as follows:

A Washington state—British Columbia interparliamentary exchange group is created. The purpose of the group is to facilitate legislator-to-legislator communication between the two governments, in coordination with the province of British Columbia. The state's representative for the group is the chair of the legislative committee on economic development and international relations.

**Sec.**  RCW 43.15.090 and 1985 c 467 s 23 are each amended to read as follows:

The legislative committee on economic development and international relations shall cooperate, act, and function with legislative committees, executive agencies, and with the councils or committees of other states and of provinces and territories of Canada similar to this committee, and with other interstate research organizations.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  RCW 43.330.065 is recodified as a section in chapter 43.290 RCW.

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