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**HOUSE BILL 2143**

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

**By** Representatives Ramel, Hackney, Berg, Fosse, Duerr, and Reeves

AN ACT Relating to providing information related to the human rights records of nations that export crude oil to Washington; adding a new section to chapter 28B.20 RCW; adding a new section to chapter 43.21A RCW; and creating a new section.

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

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) The legislature finds that the price of motor fuel is an insufficient measure of the collective cost of our energy choices. In the face of growing evidence of impending climate disaster driven by fossil fuel consumption, the legislature has adopted policies to steadily reduce our reliance on fossil fuels, and to incentivize the adoption of alternatives. As consumers in Washington become less and less dependent on oil consumption, our state would benefit from a deeper understanding of the places and processes involved in the production of Washington energy. It is important to the legislature that we and the people of Washington understand the social impacts of crude oil consumption as well as its environmental impact.

(2) The United States currently prohibits crude oil imports from Russia on the basis that Russia is engaged in an unjustified, unprovoked, and unconscionable war against Ukraine in violation of international law. Although the current ban on crude oil imports from Russia is based on Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine, according to reports from human rights watch, Russia has also engaged in, and continues to engage in, a host of additional human rights abuses, including the assassination and imprisonment of political opponents, restrictions on the freedoms of expression and assembly, and the repression of racial minorities. In 2021, the year before this ban took effect, Washington imported nearly 10 million barrels of crude oil from Russia. Similarly, the United States significantly limited crude oil imports from Venezuela for multiple years, in recognition of Venezuela's abuses of human rights and fundamental freedoms. According to reports from human rights watch, Saudi Arabia, from which Washington imported nearly eight million barrels of crude oil in 2022, has engaged in multiple human rights abuses, including violations of international humanitarian law in its air strikes of Yemen, repression of women's rights, and the mistreatment of migrant workers.

(3) The legislature finds that the University of Washington is uniquely qualified to convene a symposium on the challenging, complex questions surrounding the human rights cost of oil consumption in Washington state. The University of Washington has the capacity to convene the participants necessary for a thoughtful, informed discussion of the human rights aspect of Washington's oil consumption, including academic and policy experts on the primary oil producing countries from which Washington obtains crude oil, experts on human rights and the oil industry, and local stakeholders, including residents, elected officials, tribal governments, and environmental and human rights advocates.

(4) Because of the importance of this issue and of helping to inform Washington residents of the human rights dimension of their motor fuel purchases, it is the intent of the legislature to direct the University of Washington to convene a symposium on the human rights records of the nations that export crude oil to Washington state.

(5) The legislature further finds that the department of ecology already gathers adequate information on the sourcing of crude oil used in Washington and that further dissemination of this information to policymakers and consumers would provide important and actionable information.

(6) It is the hope of the legislature that as Washington uses less and less crude oil in the future, providing ready access to reliable information about the human rights records associated with countries that export crude oil to Washington will help consumers, if they choose, to avoid oil sourced from countries where oil sales may support serious and concerning human rights abuses.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 28B.20 RCW to read as follows:

(1) The University of Washington shall convene a biennial symposium related to the human rights records of nations that export crude oil to Washington.

(2) The symposium must be open to the public, either in person or virtually.

(3) The topics that the University of Washington should address in the human rights symposium include, but are not limited to:

(a) The human rights implications of Washington's consumption of crude oil;

(b) The global sources of the crude oil refined in Washington and how the sources of crude oil refined in Washington have changed in recent years;

(c) The human rights records of the countries of origin of crude oil refined in Washington and how revenues derived from the extraction and export of crude oil impacts the human rights records of these countries;

(d) As Washington reduces its consumption of oil, whether, and in what fashion, purchasers of motor fuel and other products derived from crude oil should prioritize purchases from certain countries over others based on human rights considerations; and

(e) Potential policies at the state and federal level that would help to ensure that core democratic values, including human rights, are upheld in Washington's oil consumption.

(4) Following the symposium, the University of Washington shall publish a written report that includes both a brief accounting of the human rights records of the primary countries from which Washington obtains crude oil, as well as summaries of the deliberations at the symposium.

(5) The University of Washington must develop and maintain a publicly accessible website on which it publishes the proceedings of each human rights symposium, including the written report prepared pursuant to subsection (4) of this section.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 43.21A RCW to read as follows:

(1) The department must develop and maintain a publicly accessible website on which it publishes a summary of information related to crude oil imported to Washington.

(2) The summary that the department publishes must include, but is not limited to, the following information:

(a) The name of each nation from which each refinery operator in Washington has imported crude oil; and

(b) The volume of crude oil that each refinery operator has received from each nation from which it has imported crude oil.

(3) In the course of gathering and updating the oil import data needed to maintain the website developed pursuant to this section, the department shall draw upon those sources that it determines to offer the most accurate and current data including, but not limited to, the United States energy information administration.

(4) In addition to the summary of information related to crude oil imported by each refinery operator in Washington, the department must indicate on the website that the University of Washington conducts a biennial symposium related to the human rights records of nations that export oil to Washington. The department must provide on the website a link to the University of Washington's website dedicated to the proceedings of the human rights symposium.

(5) When the department updates the website established pursuant to this section, whether in relation to crude oil imported by Washington's refineries or in relation to the University of Washington's human rights symposium, the department shall engage in publicity activities that are reasonably calculated to communicate the updates to Washington residents.

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