
HOUSE BILL 3063

State of Washington

55th Legislature

1998 Regular Session

By Representatives Constantine, Regala, Cooper, Linville, Poulsen and Anderson

Read first time 01/28/98. Referred to Committee on Agriculture & Ecology.

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 is a growing scientific consensus that increases in
6 atmospheric concentrations of gases such as carbon dioxide have altered
7 the earth's climate system, warming the earth's surface and producing
8 other climate changes;

9 (2) Even if concentrations of these gases are stabilized in the
10 near future, Washington citizens and businesses may be faced with
11 temperature and sea level changes as the earth's climate system adjusts
12 to elevated carbon levels;

13 (3) Much of the research to date on climate change takes a global
14 perspective, while much less information is available on potential
15 climate change impacts to smaller regions such as Washington state and
16 the Pacific Northwest;

17 (4) Regional climate changes may have a number of major impacts,
18 both negative and positive, on the economy and the public health and
19 safety of Washington and the Pacific Northwest; and

1 (5) The citizens and businesses of Washington will be better
2 positioned to adjust to any such changes if the legislature undertakes
3 an effort to identify what the regional climate changes are likely to
4 be and how citizens and businesses can plan for, mitigate, or take
5 advantage of these impending climate changes.

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1) There is created the joint select
7 committee on climate change. The committee shall be comprised of eight
8 members of the house of representatives, four from each caucus,
9 selected by the speaker of the house, and eight members of the senate,
10 four from each caucus, selected by the president of the senate. In
11 making appointments to this joint select committee, the speaker shall
12 select two members, one from each caucus, from the energy and
13 utilities, agriculture and ecology, and natural resources committees,
14 and from the membership at large. The president shall select two
15 members, one from each caucus, from the energy and utilities,
16 agriculture and environment, and natural resources and parks
17 committees, and from the membership at large. Committee members shall
18 select from among themselves a committee chair and vice-chair.

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

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

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

34 (c) Possible changes to the state's capability to produce
35 agricultural commodities due to changes in temperature and
36 precipitation patterns, growing seasons, availability and timing of
37 flows for irrigation, and crop response to increased levels of carbon
38 dioxide;

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

34 (6) The committee shall report its findings and recommendations to
35 the legislature by December 1, 1998.

36 (7) The committee expires June 1, 1999.

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