

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HJM 4023

As Reported by House Committee On:
Select Committee on Community Security

Brief Description: Supporting the development of an action plan for regional infrastructure security.

Sponsors: Representatives Morris, Barlean, Schual-Berke, Kessler, Conway, Schmidt, Lysen, Wood, Ballasiotes, O'Brien, Upthegrove, Edwards, Kenney, Anderson and Kagi.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Select Committee on Community Security: 2/5/02 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Expresses the Washington State Legislature's support for a binational regional exercise in the Pacific Northwest to develop an action plan for regional infrastructure security.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON SELECT COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY SECURITY

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 14 members: Representatives Hurst, Chair; Simpson, Vice Chair; Lisk, Ranking Minority Member; Ballasiotes, Barlean, Benson, Buck, Haigh, Jackley, Kessler, Morris, O'Brien, Schmidt and Schual-Berke.

Staff: Caroleen Dineen (786-7156).

Background:

In 1991 the Pacific Northwest Economic Region (PNWER) Agreement was enacted in Washington. At that time the state agreed to participate in PNWER, a regional organization focused on promoting regional collaboration and enhancing regional competitiveness in international and domestic markets. Policy areas within PNWER's consideration include international trade, economic development, human resources, environment and natural resources, energy, and education. Substantive actions of PNWER may take the form of uniform legislation and other policy initiatives endorsed by participating entities.

Washington, Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon and the Canadian provinces of Alberta, British Columbia, and the Yukon are members of PNWER. The organization's structure consists of a delegate council and an executive committee. Legislators are appointed by participating states and provinces to serve on these committees. The PNWER also has working groups for various policy areas.

Summary of Bill:

The Legislature expresses its support to the President of the United States, the United States Congress, and the Federal Office of Homeland Security for a binational exercise in the Pacific Northwest to address infrastructure interdependencies in order to develop an action plan for regional infrastructure security. The Legislature supports this exercise being conducted under the auspices of the Pacific Northwest Economic Region (PNWER). The Legislature also recognizes:

- The PNWER's efforts to develop a multi-state, binational Partnership for Regional Infrastructure Security of public and private stakeholders to address interdependency issues and work toward an action plan for a "disaster resistant" region;
 - Canada's federal Office of Critical Infrastructure Protection and Emergency Preparedness' agreement to support a binational exercise addressing the infrastructure interdependencies between border states and provinces; and
 - the United States Office of Critical Infrastructure Protection and the Homeland Security Department's interest in conducting a binational regional exercise with Canada.
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Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not Requested.

Testimony For: It is difficult to identify a region in the United States more interdependent than the Pacific Northwest. Infrastructure was not built with security in mind, and assessment of the vulnerability of critical nodes is needed. Canada and the United States are looking for an opportunity to conduct a joint exercise, and the federal agencies of both countries are looking for a model. This memorial sends a strong message to the federal government to pursue this joint exercise in the Pacific Northwest.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Representative Morris, prime sponsor; and Matt Morrison, Executive Director, Pacific Northwest Economic Region.

