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SENATE BILL 6619

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State of Washington 57th Legislature

2002 Regular Session

By Senators Poulsen, Jacobsen, Fraser, Morton and Regala

Read first time 01/23/2002. Referred to Committee on Environment,  
Energy & Water.

1 AN ACT Relating to the Washington climate and rural energy  
2 development center; adding a new chapter to Title 70 RCW; and providing  
3 an effective date.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature makes the following  
6 findings:

7 (1) The recent consensus report of the world's climate research  
8 community has concluded that significant climate change is already  
9 underway, that it is unprecedented, and that it is at least partially  
10 caused by human activity.

11 (2) The best available analyses by northwest climate experts now  
12 indicate a projected doubling of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere is  
13 now expected to increase the average temperature in Washington state  
14 four to seven degrees over the next fifty years.

15 (3) Such changes are likely to have major, adverse impacts on the  
16 state's environment and economy.

17 (4) The citizens of Washington state have consistently demonstrated  
18 global scientific, technological, and policy leadership.

1        NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 2.**    The definitions in this section apply  
2 throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

3        (1) "Center" means the Washington climate and rural energy  
4 development center.

5        (2) "Climate change" means a change of climate attributed directly  
6 or indirectly to human activity that alters the composition of the  
7 global atmosphere.

8        (3) "Emissions" means the release of greenhouse gases.

9        (4) "Emitter" means the entity releasing greenhouse gases.

10       (5) "Greenhouse gases" includes carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), methane and  
11 natural gas (CH<sub>4</sub>), and nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O).

12       NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 3.**    The state legislature authorizes the  
13 establishment of the Washington climate and rural energy development  
14 center under the auspices of the Washington State University energy  
15 program to serve as a central clearinghouse for all climate change and  
16 clean energy development activities in the state.

17       NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 4.**    The center shall be funded through grants,  
18 voluntary cash and in-kind contributions, and any mandatory or  
19 voluntary fees and costs paid to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

20       NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 5.**    (1) The duties of the center may include,  
21 but are not limited to:

22        (a) Determining current and projected emissions of greenhouse gases  
23 in the state;

24        (b) Collecting and sharing scientific and technological data  
25 related to climate change;

26        (c) Assisting and collecting all climate contingency planning in  
27 the state;

28        (d) Directing all available state resources toward developing clean  
29 energy programs and industries in the depressed rural areas of the  
30 state;

31        (e) Advising relevant sectors of prospective commercial  
32 opportunities;

33        (f) Studying and recommending avenues for reducing short-term and  
34 long-term greenhouse gas emissions in the state;

35        (g) Studying and recommending the most cost-effective methods for  
36 eliminating all net greenhouse gas emissions in the state, taking into

1 consideration the absorption of greenhouse gas emissions through carbon  
2 sequestration;

3 (h) Studying and recommending the most cost-effective methods for  
4 reducing greenhouse gas emissions from the transportation sector  
5 consistent with federal law;

6 (i) Certifying the extent and degree of any mitigation projects;

7 (j) Developing adequate methods for the monitoring and verification  
8 of mitigation projects; and

9 (k) Serving as a central, independent registry available for the  
10 trading of emissions credits, if any.

11 (2) The center shall:

12 (a) Develop and publish its rules of operation, calculations, and  
13 methods;

14 (b) Accomplish any other duty assigned to it by the legislature for  
15 which adequate funding is provided; and

16 (c) Provide an annual report to the governor and legislature by  
17 December 31st regarding its operations, including the status of  
18 greenhouse gas emissions in the state.

19 (3) The center shall, within available funds, also:

20 (a) Identify key sectors within the state likely to be affected  
21 adversely by climate change;

22 (b) Notify and convene meetings of key members of those sectors;

23 (c) Provide relevant scientific and technological information to  
24 the public and key sectors;

25 (d) Support a collaborative response to assist those sectors;

26 (e) Assist in the creation of effective contingency planning for  
27 those sectors; and

28 (f) Examine and report the feasibility of a carbon storage program  
29 for the state by:

30 (i) Evaluating other states' and nations' attempts to establish  
31 carbon credit programs, carbon storage programs, carbon storage  
32 requirements worldwide, and methods and scientific programs that are  
33 used to implement carbon storage programs;

34 (ii) Analyzing other programs in the state of Washington, including  
35 the conservation reserve enhancement program, that could facilitate a  
36 carbon storage program and a stable carbon storage market;

37 (iii) Analyzing methods to encourage and increase appropriate  
38 carbon storage activities; and

1 (iv) Developing and preparing appropriate legislative responses and  
2 recommendations.

3 (4) The following agencies and programs will work with the center  
4 to assist with the duties under this section: The department of  
5 community, trade, and economic development, the department of ecology,  
6 the department of transportation, the department of health, the  
7 department of fish and wildlife, the department of agriculture, the  
8 department of natural resources, and the Washington State University  
9 energy program.

10 (5) The center may establish task forces and technical advisory  
11 committees composed of state and local agencies, businesses, labor  
12 groups, timber industry groups, agricultural groups, nonprofit  
13 organizations, university and college programs, and interested groups  
14 and citizens as necessary to assist in the duties in this section.

15 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** (1) All emitters of greenhouse gases are  
16 encouraged to seek mitigation of their emissions.

17 (2) Upon a request, accompanied with adequate funding, the center  
18 may:

19 (a) Assist any emitter in selecting mitigation projects;

20 (b) Determine and certify the amount of mitigation accomplished by  
21 any mitigation project; and

22 (c) Determine what monitoring and verification standards would be  
23 useful in the evaluation of mitigation projects.

24 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 7.** The center shall publicize successful  
25 mitigation projects and efforts to reduce the emission of greenhouse  
26 gases.

27 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 8.** This act takes effect July 1, 2002.

28 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 9.** Sections 1 through 8 of this act constitute  
29 a new chapter in Title 70 RCW.

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