

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHJM 4000

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Natural Resources, Energy & Water, March 26, 2003

Brief Description: Supporting regional infrastructure security.

Sponsors: House Committee on Technology, Telecommunications & Energy (originally sponsored by Representatives Morris, Kenney, Conway, Lovick, Linville, Anderson and O'Brien).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Natural Resources, Energy & Water: 3/20/03, 3/26/03 [DPA].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES, ENERGY & WATER

Majority Report: Do pass as amended.

Signed by Senators Morton, Chair; Hewitt, Vice Chair; Doumit, Fraser, Hale, Hargrove, Honeyford and Regala.

Staff: Genevieve Pisarski (786-7488)

Background: Since 1991, the state has been a member of the Pacific Northwest Economic Region (PNWER), a forum for promoting regional collaboration and enhancing regional competitiveness in international and domestic markets. The PNWER develops recommendations for legislation and other policy initiatives, concerning international trade, economic development, human resources, environment and natural resources, energy, and education. The members of PNWER appoint legislators to serve on its committees and working groups for various policy areas. Besides Washington, the members are Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and the Canadian provinces of Alberta, British Columbia, and the Yukon.

In 2001, the PNWER launched the Partnership for Regional Infrastructure Security and, in 2002, sponsored an exercise that explored infrastructure interdependencies within the region and identified numerous areas of concern regarding shortfalls in regional disaster preparedness.

Summary of Amended Bill: The Legislature expresses its support to the President and Congress of the United States and the Secretary-Designate of the Department of Homeland Security for the department to review the key findings of the Blue Cascades exercise for regional infrastructure security, consider an action plan, and provide funding for implementation.

Amended Bill Compared to Substitute Bill: The request to the Department of Homeland Security is to review, rather than address, the Blue Cascades findings; to consider, rather than develop, an action plan; and, also, to provide funding.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Testimony For: The Blue Cascades exercise conducted by the Pacific Northwest Economic Region identified the degree of interdependency among both public and private infrastructures in our region, the points of vulnerability to disruption, the extent of cumulative effects from disruption, and the gaps in ability to respond effectively. This important information should be used to improve the region's ability to respond and minimize the effects of disruptions.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Representative Morris, prime sponsor (pro).