
SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 6217

State of Washington

58th Legislature

2004 Regular Session

By Senate Committee on Natural Resources, Energy & Water (originally sponsored by Senators Swecker, Prentice, Doumit, Berkey, Morton, Rasmussen, Hale, Jacobsen, Hargrove, Regala, Finkbeiner, T. Sheldon, Horn, Esser, Oke and Haugen)

READ FIRST TIME 02/06/04.

1 AN ACT Relating to regulatory improvement; and adding a new chapter
2 to Title 43 RCW.

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

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that the protection of
5 Washington's natural resources and environment is a vital interest of
6 the state, and that providing a high quality of life for the citizens
7 of the state requires both a healthy environment and a strong economy.
8 The legislature further finds that the federal, state, and local
9 permitting systems that have been established for the protection of the
10 environment are extremely time consuming, and may conflict, be
11 inconsistently applied, or duplicative, yet may not yield positive
12 environmental outcomes or adequately involve the public.

13 It is therefore the intent of the legislature to foster a public-
14 private partnership dedicated to improving the state's competitiveness
15 by developing new approaches to environmental permitting.

16 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** The Washington regulatory improvement
17 project is created to be a collaborative effort between private
18 industry, the state's universities, and government.

1 The mission of the regulatory improvement project is to improve the
2 state's economic competitiveness and environmental outcomes by
3 assisting state, federal, and local governmental entities to revise and
4 streamline environmental permitting processes. The project may engage
5 in the following activities:

6 (1) Develop recommendations for single or multiagency programmatic
7 permits for routine or industry-specific activities, with cooperation
8 from representatives of affected industries, state, federal, and local
9 agencies, and the public. Such recommendations may be implemented
10 through agency policy changes or recommendations to the legislature for
11 statutory change;

12 (2) Develop recommendations or guidance for facilitating watershed-
13 based environmental mitigation. This should include methods for
14 collating and accessing watershed data, methods to identify and
15 prioritize mitigation opportunities, and methods to implement
16 watershed-based mitigation through local, state, and federal permitting
17 systems;

18 (3) Identify opportunities in the environmental permitting process
19 to improve the value of public involvement and participation and
20 improve environmental outcomes;

21 (4) Develop recommendations for future streamlining and
22 effectiveness efforts, which may include their structure, staffing,
23 funding, inclusion of pilot projects, and any other elements; and

24 (5) Develop recommendations for funding the project and the related
25 work of its members from public and private sources.

26 Quarterly progress reports will be made to the legislature. The
27 first report is due December 1, 2004.

28 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** (1) The Washington regulatory improvement
29 project consists of the following members:

30 (a) Two members of the senate, one from each of the two largest
31 caucuses, appointed by the president of the senate;

32 (b) Two members of the house of representatives, one from each of
33 the two largest caucuses, appointed by the speaker of the house of
34 representatives;

35 (c) The director or director's designee of the office of regulatory
36 assistance;

1 (d) The director or director's designee of the department of
2 ecology;

3 (e) The director or director's designee of the department of fish
4 and wildlife;

5 (f) The commissioner of public lands or the commissioner's
6 designee;

7 (g) The director or director's designee of the department of
8 transportation;

9 (h) A representative of the association of Washington cities,
10 appointed by the governor;

11 (i) A representative of the Washington state association of
12 counties, appointed by the governor;

13 (j) A representative of the Washington public ports association,
14 appointed by the governor;

15 (k) One representative of environmental interests, appointed by the
16 governor; and

17 (l) One representative of the business community, appointed by the
18 governor from nominees proposed by the association of Washington
19 business, the building industry association of Washington, and the
20 association of general contractors.

21 (2) Representatives of federal permitting agencies, tribes, and the
22 state's universities must be invited to participate.

23 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** The role of the Washington regulatory
24 improvement project is solely that of research, coordination, and
25 development of recommendations for system improvements. Nothing in
26 this chapter may be construed to diminish the functions, powers, or
27 duties granted to any permit agency by law. Nothing in this chapter
28 grants the Washington regulatory improvement project the authority to
29 issue, condition, or deny any permit.

30 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** Sections 1 through 4 of this act constitute
31 a new chapter in Title 43 RCW.

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