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## Environment Committee

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### HB 2654

**Brief Description:** Codifying the existence of the climate impacts group without making modifications to its current mission.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Seaquist and Pollet.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Brief Summary of Bill</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Codifies the existence of the Climate Impacts Group, to be housed at the University of Washington.</li></ul>
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**Hearing Date:** 1/31/14

**Staff:** Jason Callahan (786-7117).

**Background:**

The Climate Impacts Group (CIG) is an existing interdisciplinary research group housed in the College of the Environment at the University of Washington. The focus of the group is to study the impacts of natural climate variability and global climate change. The CIG considers climate impacts at spatial scales ranging from local communities to the entire western U.S. region, with a focus on the Pacific Northwest. According to the CIG, the research focuses on the intersection of climate science, public policy, and resource management.

Although the Legislature has used the budgeting process to commission work of the CIG in the past, the CIG does not receive direct financial support from the UW or the state budget. The existence of the CIG is not codified in state statutes.

**Summary of Bill:**

The CIG is officially recognized in statute as a unit housed within the UW. Although housed in the UW, the UW is not required to maintain or provide direct financial support to the CIG. The CIG is directed to strive to serve as a centralized, interdisciplinary resource for the state of

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Washington to study and assist in the understanding of the effects and impacts of natural climate variability and global climate change by focusing on the intersection of climate science, public policy, and resource management.

Enumerated examples of this charge include pursuing coordinated research and education related to climate risks and opportunities for various sectors in Washington, serving as a credible and expert source of climate information for state and local decision makers, and supporting state agencies and local governments in developing strategies to prepare for, and to respond to, the effects of climate variability and change on natural and human systems.

The CIG is expected to maintain areas of focus. These include water resources, the potential impacts of sea level rise, and an evaluation of the economic, ecological, and societal dimensions of climate risks, opportunities, and response strategies in both the rural and urban environments. The results of any research funded by the state that is undertaken by the CIG, or in which the CIG participates, must be available to all industries and citizens of the state of Washington.

When appropriate to achieving its purposes, the CIG must cooperate and coordinate with other entities to fulfill its objectives. These entities include other universities and other colleges within the UW, governmental agencies at all levels, public advocacy organizations, tribal governments, and domestic or foreign industrial and business institutions. State agencies and local governments are encouraged to contract with the CIG to fulfill agency needs regarding the collection, storage, integration, analysis, dissemination, interpretation, application, and monitoring of climate change information, research, and training.

The CIG is permitted to solicit gifts, grants, conveyances, bequests, and other devices to aid it in carrying out its mission. The CIG may also solicit contracts for work, financial and in-kind contributions, and support from private industries, interest groups, and federal, state, and tribal sources. The CIG may utilize separately appropriated funds of the UW for the climate impacts group operations and activities.

The director of the CIG may appoint and maintain a policy advisory committee to advise the director on policies for the CIG. Any such committee must represent, to the extent possible, the various interests concerned with the work of the CIG. Members of any policy advisory committee must serve without salary or other compensation, but may be reimbursed for travel expenses.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.