

LEGISLATURE OF NEBRASKA
ONE HUNDRED FOURTH LEGISLATURE
SECOND SESSION

LEGISLATIVE BILL 802

Introduced by Haar, 21; Mello, 5.

Read first time January 07, 2016

Committee:

- 1 A BILL FOR AN ACT relating to public health and welfare; to state intent;
- 2 to create the Health and Climate Resiliency Task Force; and to
- 3 provide powers and duties.
- 4 Be it enacted by the people of the State of Nebraska,

1 Section 1. The Legislature finds that:

2 (1) Climate change presents serious, diverse, and ongoing issues for
3 Nebraska, including serious impacts to the health and well-being of
4 Nebraskans;

5 (2) Many sectors that play a role in human health and well-being
6 will be impacted by climate change, including water resources,
7 agriculture, health care, energy generation and use, ecosystems, rural
8 and urban communities, and insurance;

9 (3) Nebraska's life-giving water and soil resources will be subject
10 to new stresses and risks due to climate change;

11 (4) The impacts of climate change on food production and global food
12 security are particularly important for the health and well-being of the
13 people of Nebraska because of the importance of agriculture to the
14 state's economy and as a source of food, fiber, and fuel for people in
15 the state and around the world;

16 (5) There are opportunities to improve the health and well-being of
17 the people of Nebraska through appropriate responses to climate change,
18 including (a) opportunities to provide leadership through adaptation and
19 mitigation measures to ensure Nebraska's continued agricultural
20 prominence in a changed climate, (b) reduced pollution by reducing use of
21 fossil fuels, (c) opportunities for development of new technologies, (d)
22 economic opportunities from development of the abundant wind and solar
23 resources of the state, and (e) new products that match Nebraska's needs
24 and resources;

25 (6) The report entitled Understanding and Assessing Climate Change
26 Implications for Nebraska, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, 2014, provides
27 a fundamental basis for understanding the impacts of climate change for
28 Nebraska;

29 (7) Appropriate planning is needed to develop strategies to mitigate
30 and adapt to the impacts of climate change on the health and well-being
31 of Nebraskans;

1 (8) The state must invest in research and data gathering, planning,
2 education, and coordination of efforts related to mitigation and
3 adaptation to the impacts of climate change on human health and well-
4 being; and

5 (9) An effective plan to meet the challenges of climate change will
6 enable the state and its communities to take advantage of opportunities
7 from adaptation and mitigation strategies, including attracting new
8 businesses and investment to Nebraska, as well as reducing the potential
9 negative impacts to human health and well-being caused by climate change.

10 Sec. 2. (1) The Health and Climate Resiliency Task Force is
11 created. The task force shall consist of the following voting members:

12 (a) Two members appointed by the chairperson of the Agriculture
13 Committee of the Legislature;

14 (b) Two members appointed by the chairperson of the Appropriations
15 Committee of the Legislature;

16 (c) Two members appointed by the chairperson of the Education
17 Committee of the Legislature;

18 (d) Two members appointed by the chairperson of the Health and Human
19 Services Committee of the Legislature; and

20 (e) Two members appointed by the chairperson of the Natural
21 Resources Committee of the Legislature.

22 (2) The voting members of the task force shall choose a chairperson
23 and a vice-chairperson from among the voting members.

24 (3) The following shall be nonvoting, ex officio members of the task
25 force:

26 (a) The Director of Agriculture or his or her designee;

27 (b) The Director of Environmental Quality or his or her designee;

28 (c) The chief executive officer of the Department of Health and
29 Human Services or his or her designee;

30 (d) The Director of Insurance or his or her designee;

31 (e) The Director of Natural Resources or his or her designee;

1 (f) The director of the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency or his
2 or her designee;

3 (g) The Director of the State Energy Office or his or her designee;

4 (h) The director of the Bureau of Business Research of the
5 University of Nebraska-Lincoln or his or her designee;

6 (i) The director of the National Drought Mitigation Center of the
7 University of Nebraska-Lincoln or his or her designee;

8 (j) The State Climatologist of the Nebraska Climate Office of the
9 University of Nebraska-Lincoln or his or her designee;

10 (k) The director of the High Plains Regional Climate Center of the
11 University of Nebraska-Lincoln or his or her designee;

12 (l) The director of the College of Public Health of the University
13 of Nebraska Medical Center or his or her designee;

14 (m) The State Forester of the Nebraska Forest Service of the
15 University of Nebraska or his or her designee; and

16 (n) The director of the Daugherty Water for Food Institute of the
17 University of Nebraska or his or her designee.

18 (4) The voting members of the task force shall appoint an advisory
19 committee using an application and selection process. The advisory
20 committee members shall be appointed to represent (a) academic experts in
21 issues related to public health and climate change, (b) advocacy groups
22 that work on issues related to climate change, (c) advocacy groups that
23 work on public health issues, (d) business organizations, (e) counties,
24 (f) municipalities, (g) natural resource districts, (h) public health
25 officials, (i) public power districts, (j) state and federal agencies,
26 and (k) such other members as deemed appropriate. The advisory committee
27 members shall be nonvoting members of the task force.

28 (5) The task force shall encourage participation from academic
29 experts, advocacy organizations, and members of the public in exploring
30 methods to address issues of climate change on human health and well-
31 being as well as opportunities to adapt, mitigate, and create resiliency

1 related to climate change on human health and well-being.

2 Sec. 3. The Health and Climate Resiliency Task Force shall create a
3 strategic plan for the State of Nebraska related to the impacts of
4 climate change on the health and well-being of Nebraskans that includes:

5 (1) Measurable goals and benchmarks, including actions needed to
6 meet the goals and benchmarks for addressing the negative impacts of
7 climate change on human health and opportunities to improve health and
8 well-being and increase resilience, including strategies for adaptation
9 and mitigation; and

10 (2) Recommendations for new policies and changes to policies and
11 programs that support the goals and benchmarks based on the information
12 and data collected and generated under section 4 of this act, including
13 funding needs and recommendations for legislation.

14 Sec. 4. In order to develop the strategic plan required by section
15 3 of this act, the Health and Climate Resiliency Task Force shall:

16 (1) Gather, share, examine, and analyze data and information related
17 to the impacts of climate change on human health and well-being,
18 including assessments of vulnerability, risks, economic impacts, and
19 adaptation and mitigation actions. Issues to be examined shall include
20 the implications of climate change on the following:

21 (a) Extreme events such as blizzards, droughts, fires, floods,
22 heatwaves, and tornadoes;

23 (b) Food and food security, including changes to agricultural
24 production;

25 (c) Vector borne illnesses;

26 (d) Air pollution;

27 (e) Water quantity and quality and resulting impacts to agriculture,
28 domestic use, and power production;

29 (f) Energy production and use;

30 (g) Ecosystems, including forests, wildlife, and habitat;

31 (h) Rural and urban communities;

1 (i) Mental health, including social change and migration;

2 (j) Insurance;

3 (k) National and local security; and

4 (1) The extent that the public is being provided accurate and
5 current information about climate change and its impacts on health and
6 well-being; and

7 (2) Examine opportunities related to climate change, including:

8 (a) Strategies for adaptation and mitigation that will improve the
9 health and well-being of the people of Nebraska;

10 (b) Economic opportunities with a particular emphasis on development
11 and adoption of new methods and management strategies in support of the
12 agricultural economy of the state, methods of generating power, or
13 beneficial use of land and water that can be used to adapt to and
14 mitigate the impacts of climate change on human health and well-being
15 that will provide jobs and economic return to Nebraskans; and

16 (c) Opportunities for public education and outreach.

17 Sec. 5. To accomplish its duties under sections 2 to 6 of this act,
18 the Health and Climate Resiliency Task Force may:

19 (1) Hold one or more public hearings;

20 (2) Request and receive information from any state or local
21 governmental entity or institution, including academic reports;

22 (3) Authorize studies and reports related to health and climate
23 change consequences or benefits, including studies of the economic
24 impacts; and

25 (4) Appoint special committees to advise and assist the task force.
26 The chairperson of the task force shall appoint members for any special
27 committee of the task force from among the members of the task force or
28 individuals from the public or private sector. A special committee shall
29 report to the task force on the progress of the special committee as
30 assigned.

31 Sec. 6. On or before December 15, 2016, the Health and Climate

1 Resiliency Task Force shall submit the strategic plan required by section
2 3 of this act to the Governor and electronically to the Executive Board
3 of the Legislative Council.