
HOUSE BILL 2225

State of Washington 65th Legislature 2017 2nd Special Session

By Representatives Slatter, Senn, and Robinson

1 AN ACT Relating to aligning Washington's greenhouse gas emissions
2 limits with those established by the United States' commitment under
3 the 2015 Paris climate agreement; amending RCW 70.235.020; and
4 creating a new section.

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

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) Global climate change is a real and
7 urgent problem caused by human activities. The state of Washington
8 and other states have been and will continue to be negatively
9 impacted by the effects of climate change, including reduced winter
10 snowpack, drought, more frequent extreme weather events, increased
11 frequencies of forest fires and insect infestations, and acidifying
12 oceans that harm shellfish and otherwise disrupt marine ecosystem
13 viability. Although actions by individuals, local governments,
14 environmentally minded businesses, and states are necessary and
15 important, climate change is nevertheless fundamentally a problem of
16 global scope.

17 (a) The trend of Washington's total annual greenhouse gas
18 emissions over time reflects the state's efforts to reduce greenhouse
19 gas emissions. In 1990, Washington's total annual greenhouse gas
20 emissions were approximately 88.4 million metric tons of carbon
21 dioxide equivalent. In 2007, Washington's total annual greenhouse gas

1 emissions were approximately 101.6 million metric tons of carbon
2 dioxide equivalent. In 2013, the most recent year for which records
3 are available, Washington's total annual greenhouse gas emissions
4 were approximately 94.4 million metric tons of carbon dioxide
5 equivalent.

6 (b) The United States has also taken certain actions at the
7 national and international scale to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
8 At the national level, these actions include increasing national fuel
9 efficiency standards for cars and light trucks and requiring all
10 states to develop plans under the federal clean air act to achieve
11 measurable greenhouse gas emissions reductions. At the international
12 level, these actions include entering into an accord with China that
13 commits both nations to measurable reductions of their greenhouse gas
14 emissions, and signing on to the 2015 Paris climate agreement.

15 (c) The Paris climate agreement is an international agreement
16 within the United Nations framework convention on climate change.
17 Under the Paris climate agreement, each participating nation
18 determines the contribution, known as the intended nationally
19 determined contribution, that it will make toward a global reduction
20 in greenhouse gas emissions. The Paris climate agreement also
21 contains a mechanism for developed countries to fund climate change
22 adaptation and mitigation in developing countries. A total of one
23 hundred ninety-five nations have signed the Paris climate agreement.

24 (d) The United States signed the Paris climate agreement on April
25 22, 2016. Under the intended nationally determined contribution that
26 the United States submitted to the United Nations, the United States
27 committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions to twenty-six percent
28 below 2005 levels by 2025, and to making best efforts to reduce
29 greenhouse gas emissions to twenty-eight percent below 2005 levels.

30 (2) It is the intent of the legislature to declare that,
31 notwithstanding the June 1, 2017, announcement that the United States
32 would withdraw from the 2015 Paris climate agreement, Washington
33 state intends to fulfill its portion of the United States' commitment
34 under the 2015 Paris climate agreement by reducing its greenhouse gas
35 emissions at a rate that is consistent with the intended nationally
36 determined contribution submitted by the United States to the United
37 Nations.

38 **Sec. 2.** RCW 70.235.020 and 2008 c 14 s 3 are each amended to
39 read as follows:

1 (1)(a) The state shall limit emissions of greenhouse gases to
2 achieve the following emission reductions for Washington state:

3 (i) By 2020, reduce overall emissions of greenhouse gases in the
4 state to 1990 levels;

5 (ii) By 2025, reduce greenhouse gas emissions to twenty-six
6 percent below 2005 levels, and to make best efforts to reduce
7 greenhouse gas emissions to twenty-eight percent below 2005 levels,
8 consistent with the commitment submitted to the United Nations as the
9 intended nationally determined contribution by the United States
10 under the 2015 Paris climate agreement;

11 (iii) By 2035, reduce overall emissions of greenhouse gases in
12 the state to twenty-five percent below 1990 levels;

13 ((iii)) (iv) By 2050, the state will do its part to reach
14 global climate stabilization levels by reducing overall emissions to
15 fifty percent below 1990 levels, or seventy percent below the state's
16 expected emissions that year.

17 (b) By December 1, 2008, the department shall submit a greenhouse
18 gas reduction plan for review and approval to the legislature,
19 describing those actions necessary to achieve the emissions
20 reductions in (a) of this subsection by using existing statutory
21 authority and any additional authority granted by the legislature.
22 Actions taken using existing statutory authority may proceed prior to
23 approval of the greenhouse gas reduction plan.

24 (c) Except where explicitly stated otherwise, nothing in chapter
25 14, Laws of 2008 limits any state agency authorities as they existed
26 prior to June 12, 2008.

27 (d) Consistent with this directive, the department shall take the
28 following actions:

29 (i) Develop and implement a system for monitoring and reporting
30 emissions of greenhouse gases as required under RCW 70.94.151; and

31 (ii) Track progress toward meeting the emissions reductions
32 established in this subsection, including the results from policies
33 currently in effect that have been previously adopted by the state
34 and policies adopted in the future, and report on that progress.

35 (2) By December 31st of each even-numbered year beginning in
36 2010, the department and the department of ((community, trade, and
37 economic development)) commerce shall report to the governor and the
38 appropriate committees of the senate and house of representatives the
39 total emissions of greenhouse gases for the preceding two years, and
40 totals in each major source sector. The department shall ensure the

1 reporting rules adopted under RCW 70.94.151 allow it to develop a
2 comprehensive inventory of emissions of greenhouse gases from all
3 significant sectors of the Washington economy.

4 (3) Except for purposes of reporting, emissions of carbon dioxide
5 from industrial combustion of biomass in the form of fuel wood, wood
6 waste, wood by-products, and wood residuals shall not be considered a
7 greenhouse gas as long as the region's silvicultural sequestration
8 capacity is maintained or increased.

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