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**SENATE BILL 5247**

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**State of Washington**

**68th Legislature**

**2023 Regular Session**

**By** Senators Nobles and Saldaña; by request of Office of the Governor

1 AN ACT Relating to developing opportunities for service and  
2 workforce programs to support climate-ready communities; adding new  
3 sections to chapter 43.41 RCW; adding new sections to chapter 28C.18  
4 RCW; creating a new section; and repealing RCW 43.330.310, 50.12.320,  
5 and 28C.18.170.

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

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature recognizes that  
8 climate change is one of the greatest challenges facing the state and  
9 the world today, and that we must mobilize Washington's young adults,  
10 veterans, and workforce to create the clean energy economy and  
11 strengthen our communities and ecosystems in the face of climate  
12 impacts.

13 (2) The legislature finds that service provides a unique  
14 opportunity to mobilize young adults and veterans to build clean  
15 energy and climate-resilient communities, economies, and ecosystems.  
16 Growing equity-centered, climate-related service programs and  
17 addressing critical gaps in service opportunities will broaden access  
18 to service, ensuring that young adults and veterans of all  
19 backgrounds, especially from overburdened communities and vulnerable  
20 populations, can serve. Doing so will also ensure that service  
21 programs address the needs of communities across the state,

1 especially those communities disproportionately impacted by  
2 environmental and health burdens.

3 (3) The legislature further finds as our state transitions away  
4 from a fossil fuel-based economy, we must do so in a way that fosters  
5 innovation, investment, and growth in clean energy technology sectors  
6 and jobs so our businesses, workforce, and communities can thrive. As  
7 state, federal, local, and tribal governments implement policies to  
8 mitigate the destructive forces of climate change, there will be  
9 consequences for Washington's businesses, workers, and communities.  
10 Accomplishing an equitable transition will require identification of  
11 future industry occupations and skill needs, the existing workforce's  
12 transferrable skills to meet those needs, and the gaps that need to  
13 be addressed through training and education. The state must also  
14 provide support in the transition for workers and communities  
15 experiencing declining jobs and revenues associated with high-  
16 emissions technologies.

17 (4) Therefore, to create pathways for workers, young adults, and  
18 veterans to help build our clean energy, climate-resilient future,  
19 the legislature intends to create the Washington climate corps  
20 network and to direct the Washington state workforce training and  
21 education coordinating board to establish a clean energy technology  
22 advisory committee and to evaluate clean energy technology workforce  
23 needs and make recommendations to the governor and legislature.

24 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 43.41  
25 RCW to read as follows:

26 (1) The Washington climate corps network is established to  
27 support and grow climate-related service opportunities for young  
28 adults and veterans with the objective of building low-carbon and  
29 climate-resilient communities, ecosystems, and economies while  
30 providing education, workforce development, and career pathways to  
31 service members, with a focus on overburdened communities as defined  
32 in RCW 70A.02.010. The Washington climate corps network shall be  
33 administered by serve Washington, an entity created in Executive  
34 Order 16-08, signed August 24, 2016. The office shall provide the  
35 administrative support to serve Washington to facilitate the  
36 establishment and operation of the Washington climate corps network.

37 (2) Serve Washington has the following duties:

38 (a) Connect, amplify, and grow climate-related service  
39 opportunities to mobilize and train young adults and veterans to

1 build clean energy and climate-resilient communities, economies, and  
2 ecosystems, with priority on doing so in overburdened communities as  
3 defined in RCW 70A.02.010. In growing new, climate-related service  
4 opportunities, serve Washington shall consider the findings and  
5 recommendations from the clean energy technology workforce advisory  
6 committee established under section 4 of this act;

7 (b) Establish common requirements for participating service  
8 programs including, but not limited to, a focus on climate-related  
9 activities, service member participation in events, and service  
10 member participation in the service-learning program established in  
11 (c) of this subsection;

12 (c) Develop and administer a service-learning program that  
13 provides training to climate corps network service members during  
14 their tenure of service. The service-learning program must provide  
15 training and learning opportunities to develop leadership skills,  
16 foster environmental stewardship and civic engagement, and expose  
17 members to an array of climate-related professional and educational  
18 opportunities. Training is not intended to supplant or replace  
19 technical training or apprenticeship programs hosted by labor unions.  
20 Serve Washington shall coordinate with the following entities in the  
21 design and administration of the service-learning program: Service  
22 programs; tribes; environmental justice organizations; labor  
23 organizations; institutions that provide career and technical  
24 education; and the workforce training and education coordinating  
25 board created in chapter 28C.18 RCW; and

26 (d) Administer grants to support and broaden access to climate-  
27 related service programs, with priority to supporting service in,  
28 for, or by members of overburdened communities as defined in RCW  
29 70A.02.010. Serve Washington shall establish a transparent process  
30 for establishing priorities and selection criteria. Serve Washington  
31 may provide grants to:

32 (i) Support equitable access to participation in the Washington  
33 climate corps network and reduce financial barriers for service  
34 members. This includes, but is not limited to, augmenting a service  
35 member's living allowance with the intent to achieve or exceed the  
36 living wage established in the county of service, if a living wage is  
37 in place;

38 (ii) Reduce the cost of climate corps network service programs to  
39 host service members; and

1 (iii) Support the development of new service programs in  
2 geographic and topical areas that currently lack robust climate-  
3 related service programs.

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 43.41  
5 RCW to read as follows:

6 (1) In administration of the Washington climate corps network,  
7 the office and serve Washington have the following powers:

8 (a) The office, in consultation with serve Washington, may adopt  
9 rules pursuant to chapter 34.05 RCW as shall be necessary to  
10 implement the purpose of this chapter. Rules may include provisions  
11 to:

12 (i) Establish common requirements and eligibility criteria under  
13 section 2(2)(b) of this act;

14 (ii) Establish a transparent process for establishing priorities  
15 and selection criteria for grants dispersed under section 2(2)(d) of  
16 this act;

17 (b) Receive gifts, grants, and endowments from public or private  
18 sources that are made for the use or benefit of the Washington  
19 climate corps network and to expend the same or any income therefrom  
20 according to their terms and the purpose of this chapter.

21 (2) In carrying out its duties, serve Washington may establish  
22 such relationships with public and private institutions, the federal  
23 government, tribes, local governments, private industry, community  
24 organizations, and other segments of the general public as may be  
25 needed to promote and enable climate action through service.

26 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** A new section is added to chapter 28C.18  
27 RCW to read as follows:

28 (1) The board shall establish a clean energy technology workforce  
29 advisory committee. The goal of the clean energy technology workforce  
30 advisory committee is to advise policymakers on efforts to support  
31 the expansion of clean energy technology sectors and jobs by  
32 prioritizing transition of the existing skilled workforce to new  
33 industry sectors and providing training opportunities where needed to  
34 address gaps, as well as mitigating the impact of climate change  
35 policy transitions to workers, employers, and communities.

36 (2) The clean energy technology workforce advisory committee  
37 shall:

1 (a) Review workforce and business issues in direct employment in  
2 the energy sector, in its supply chain, and the impacts of the energy  
3 transition to dependent sectors; and

4 (b) Recommend strategies to prevent workforce displacement, to  
5 support job creation in clean energy technology sectors, and to  
6 provide support for workforce-related changes to businesses and for  
7 adversely impacted workers.

8 (3) Clean energy technology workforce advisory committee  
9 membership is open to all interested parties including, but not  
10 limited to, business and worker representatives from sectors of the  
11 economy affected by the transition to clean energy.

12 (4) The clean energy technology workforce advisory committee  
13 shall select a cochair representing business and a cochair  
14 representing workers to lead the committee. Board staff shall  
15 coordinate with the cochairs to ensure that input into and  
16 deliberations of the committee reflect a balance of employer and  
17 worker perspectives.

18 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** A new section is added to chapter 28C.18  
19 RCW to read as follows:

20 (1) Each biennium, in consultation with the clean energy  
21 technology workforce advisory committee established in section 4 of  
22 this act and, at minimum, the department of commerce and the  
23 employment security department, the board shall evaluate the  
24 workforce impact of Washington's climate policies, including:

25 (a) Labor market trends and current and projected workforce  
26 demand in both traditional and clean energy technology professions,  
27 and restructuring of jobs and adjusted skillsets associated with  
28 climate change mitigation policies;

29 (b) The wage and benefits range of jobs within the clean energy  
30 technology sector;

31 (c) Demographics of the traditional and clean energy technology  
32 sectors;

33 (d) An inventory of skills needed in clean energy technology  
34 jobs, an analysis of how the skills and training of the existing  
35 workforce can fill those needs, and identification of additional  
36 workforce development needs in this sector; and

37 (e) Key challenges that could emerge under multiple future  
38 decarbonization scenarios based on factors such as rates of adoption  
39 of various new energy technologies; growth in demand for clean

1 electricity; and changes in energy production and availability from  
2 both in-state and out-of-state sources.

3 (2) The board shall conduct a literature review of the existing  
4 models, data, and study findings related to the evaluation in  
5 subsection (1) of this section to ensure a duplication of efforts  
6 does not occur.

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** A new section is added to chapter 28C.18  
8 RCW to read as follows:

9 (1) Each biennium, the board shall develop recommendations for  
10 necessary steps to support workforce training required for clean  
11 energy technology occupations. The board shall consult with impacted  
12 postsecondary training partners, including higher education providers  
13 and apprenticeship programs, and consider the following parameters in  
14 the development of their analysis and recommendations, including  
15 identifying:

16 (a) Occupational training and skills already covered in existing  
17 training programs;

18 (b) New skills that can be integrated into existing training  
19 programs;

20 (c) Occupations and skillsets that require new training programs  
21 to be developed; and

22 (d) Resources needed to deliver training programs and support  
23 workers in the transition to clean energy technology.

24 (2) The board shall conduct a study of the feasibility of a  
25 transition to retirement program to preserve income, medical, and  
26 retirement benefits for workers close to retirement who face job loss  
27 or transition because of energy technology sector changes. The board  
28 may contract with an organization to complete the study.

29 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 7.** A new section is added to chapter 28C.18  
30 RCW to read as follows:

31 Beginning November 1, 2023, and at least once every two years  
32 thereafter, the board shall report to the governor and the  
33 appropriate committees of the legislature with recommendations on how  
34 the state can support worker and employer needs in response to  
35 changing workforce requirements for clean energy technology. The  
36 report must include the recommendations of the clean energy  
37 technology workforce advisory committee established in section 4 of  
38 this act, the findings of the board's evaluation in section 5 of this

1 act, and the board's training recommendations in section 6 of this  
2 act.

3 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 8.** The following acts or parts of acts are  
4 each repealed:

5 (1) RCW 43.330.310 (Comprehensive green economy jobs growth  
6 initiative—Establishment) and 2014 c 112 s 117;

7 (2) RCW 50.12.320 (Labor market research—High-demand green  
8 industries—Middle or high-wage occupations) and 2009 c 536 s 11; and

9 (3) RCW 28C.18.170 (Green industry skill panels—Prioritization of  
10 workforce training programs) and 2009 c 536 s 8.

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