



S.B. 128

127th General Assembly
(As Introduced)

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BILL SUMMARY

- Creates the Ohio Climate Commission to study the probable impacts of global climate change on the citizens, natural resources, and economy of Ohio and on temperature and precipitation patterns in Ohio.
- Requires the Commission to issue a preliminary report by June 30, 2008, that includes all of the following: a summary of the Commission's findings; recommendations regarding the most effective state actions regarding climate change; and recommendations regarding the most effective structure for a permanent Office on Climate Change within the state's governmental structure.
- Requires the Commission to issue a final report by December 31, 2008.

CONTENT AND OPERATION

Membership

The bill creates the Ohio Climate Commission consisting of the following 11 members:

- (1) Four members appointed by the Governor as follows: one member who has scientific expertise in the area of global climate change, one member who has scientific expertise in the areas of alternative and renewable energy, one member representing the energy production industry, and one member representing a statewide environmental advocacy organization;
- (2) The Director of Environmental Protection or the Director's designee;
- (3) The Director of Natural Resources or the Director's designee;
- (4) The Director of Development or the Director's designee;

(5) Two members of the House of Representatives, one member appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives and one member appointed by the Minority Leader of the Houser of Representatives; and

(6) Two members of the Senate, one member appointed by the President of the Senate and one member appointed by the Minority Leader of the Senate. (Section 1(A).)

The bill requires all appointments to the Commission to be made within 30 days after the bill's effective date. The Commission must elect a chairperson and a vice-chairperson from among its members. Six members of the Commission constitutes a quorum, and the affirmative vote of at least six members is necessary for any action taken by the Commission. Vacancies of appointed members must be filled in the same manner as the original appointments. All members must be reimbursed for their actual and necessary expenses incurred in the discharge of their official duties as members of the Commission. (Section 1(B).)

Hearings and study

The Commission must conduct hearings and study the probable impacts of global climate change on the citizens, natural resources, and economy of Ohio, including, but not limited to, impacts on Ohio's agriculture, travel and tourism, recreation, coastal real estate, industry, insurance, and other economic sectors. The Commission also must study the probable impacts of global climate change on temperature and precipitation patterns in Ohio. The study must include all of the following:

(1) A review of current scientific literature on the possible natural and human-made causes of global climate change;

(2) A review of actions taken by the federal government, other states, and other countries to address global climate change;

(3) An examination of the emissions of greenhouse gases from within Ohio and the extent to which reductions in the emissions of those gases could be expected to affect global climate change;

(4) An examination of the economic opportunities for Ohio that may result from international, national, and state action to address global climate change and the emerging carbon market; and

(5) An examination of the costs and benefits to Ohio's citizens, environment, institutions, and economy of actions that could be taken by Ohio to address global climate change. (Section 1(C).)

The bill requires the Commission, prior to the issuance of the preliminary report discussed below, to hold at least four well-publicized public hearings in different areas of Ohio to gather information necessary to complete its study. The public hearings may be held at any time in the preliminary report draft process. Following the issuance of the preliminary report, the Commission may hold additional public hearings. (Section 1(E).)

Reports

The bill requires the Commission to issue a preliminary report by June 30, 2008, that includes all of the following:

- (1) A summary of the findings of the study discussed above;
- (2) Recommendations regarding the most effective actions that the state of Ohio should take to help reduce the rate of climate change, to mitigate the negative impacts of climate change on Ohio, and to take advantage of benefits that could result from climate change; and
- (3) Recommendations regarding the most effective structure for a permanent Office on Climate Change within the state's governmental structure. (Section 1(D).)

Copies of the preliminary report must be distributed to the Governor and each member of the General Assembly and must be made available to the public. Following the issuance of the preliminary report, the Commission must receive comments on the report, continue to study the issues required to be studied under the bill as discussed above, and issue a final report by December 31, 2008. Copies of the final report must be distributed to the Governor and each member of the General Assembly and be made available to the public. (Section 1(D).)

Miscellaneous

The bill authorizes the Commission, if, in the course of its study, it determines that it would be appropriate and desirable for the state of Ohio to establish global warming pollutant reduction goals, to develop and recommend such goals for Ohio in either the preliminary or final report of the Commission (Section 1(F)).

The Commission may work in cooperation with other states or the federal government to organize a forum on global climate change and its causes, impacts, challenges, and opportunities in the midwestern United States (Section 1(G)). It also may work in cooperation with other agencies of the state of Ohio with respect to those agencies' areas of responsibility regarding greenhouse gas emissions and climate change (Section 1(H)).

The bill requires the Environmental Protection Agency and the Legislative Service Commission to provide staff support and other necessary services to assist the Ohio Climate Commission in the exercise of its duties (Section 1(I)).

HISTORY

ACTION	DATE
Introduced	03-27-07

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