

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.B. 608
By: Watson
Natural Resources
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Currently, Texas has no agency to provide a greenhouse gas emissions (emissions) reduction plan to the legislature or to act as a resource for Texas businesses seeking to reduce their emissions. Texas businesses need to be prepared in the event of federal regulations capping emissions.

As proposed, S.B. 608 requires the State Energy Conservation Office to establish and oversee the Texas Center for Sustainable Business (center) to assist Texas businesses that seek to reduce their emissions. S.B. 608 also requires the center to develop a sustainable business action plan for reducing emissions in Texas.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Chapter 447, Government Code, by adding Section 447.014, as follows:

Sec. 447.014. CENTER FOR SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS. (a) Requires the state energy conservation office (SECO) to establish and oversee the Texas Center for Sustainable Business (center) to assist Texas businesses in reducing greenhouse gas emissions (emissions) and transitioning successfully to a low-carbon economy.

(b) Requires the center to develop a sustainable business action plan that will provide a balanced assessment of strategies for assisting businesses in reducing their emissions.

(c) Authorizes SECO to employ an executive director for the center and to contract with a private entity or an institution of higher education to assist in performing the duties of the center.

(d) Requires SECO to appoint the sustainable business advisory council with a membership that consists of at least one representative from the electric utility industry, the manufacturing industry, the petrochemical industry, the environmental industry, the transportation industry, the building industry, higher education, and state government.

(e) Authorizes the center to establish other advisory councils, task forces, or commissions it deems necessary to accomplish the center's purposes under this section.

(f) Sets forth certain requirements of the center in developing the sustainable business action plan required by Subsection (b).

(g) Requires the center to annually submit a plan to the governor and the legislature presenting the assessments and recommendations required by Subsection (f).

SECTION 2. Provides that the center is eligible to receive grants from the Texas Enterprise Fund to fund its duties under Section 447.014, Government Code, as added by this Act, during the state fiscal biennium beginning September 1, 2009.

SECTION 3. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2009.