

By: Watson

S.B. No. 608

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the creation of the Texas Center for Sustainable Business.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Chapter 447, Government Code, is amended by adding Section 447.014 to read as follows:

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

(b) The center shall develop a sustainable business action plan that will provide a balanced assessment of strategies for assisting businesses in reducing their greenhouse gas emissions.

(c) The state energy conservation office may employ an executive director for the center and may contract with a private entity or an institution of higher education to assist in performing the duties of the center.

(d) The state energy conservation office shall appoint the sustainable business advisory council. Membership on the advisory council shall consist of at least one representative from each of the following:

(1) the electric utility industry;

(2) the manufacturing industry;

- 1           (3) the petrochemical industry;
- 2           (4) the environmental industry;
- 3           (5) the transportation industry;
- 4           (6) the building industry;
- 5           (7) higher education; and
- 6           (8) state government.

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

10           (f) In developing the sustainable business action plan  
11 required by Subsection (b), the center shall:

12           (1) work with the Texas Commission on Environmental  
13 Quality and the United States Environmental Protection Agency to  
14 create an accounting of greenhouse gas emissions in this state;

15           (2) determine the total amount of carbon dioxide  
16 emissions in this state in 2005 and recommend practices,  
17 strategies, and policies that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions  
18 in this state to within a range of 97 percent to 102 percent of 2005  
19 levels by 2012, to within a range of 80 percent to 86 percent of 2005  
20 levels by 2020, to 58 percent of 2005 levels by 2030, and to 20  
21 percent of 2005 levels by 2050;

22           (3) establish a registry of actions to reduce carbon  
23 dioxide emissions that have been taken by Texas businesses since  
24 January 1, 2000, and work with the United States Environmental  
25 Protection Agency to recognize and give credit for early action  
26 under federal carbon emissions limits adopted after September 1,  
27 2009;

1           (4) identify and prioritize strategies for reducing  
2 emissions of greenhouse gases in this state that will result in net  
3 savings or in no additional financial cost to consumers or  
4 businesses of this state;

5           (5) identify, assess, and promote commercialization  
6 of technology that will achieve the greatest greenhouse gas  
7 reductions at the lowest cost;

8           (6) identify available grants for applied research to  
9 develop new technologies and other practical solutions to reduce  
10 greenhouse gas emissions; and

11           (7) assess the costs and benefits of joining the  
12 Southwest Climate Change Initiative or another regional  
13 initiative.

14           (g) The center annually shall submit a plan to the governor  
15 and the legislature presenting the assessments and recommendations  
16 required by Subsection (f).

17           SECTION 2. The Texas Center for Sustainable Business is  
18 eligible to receive grants from the Texas Enterprise Fund to fund  
19 its duties under Section 447.014, Government Code, as added by this  
20 Act, during the state fiscal biennium beginning September 1, 2009.

21           SECTION 3. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives  
22 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as  
23 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this  
24 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this  
25 Act takes effect September 1, 2009.