86R4796 MTB-D

By:  Anchia H.B. No. 942

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the creation and duties of the Global Climate Change Commission.

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

SECTION 1.  STATEMENT OF POLICY. (a) There is broad agreement between nations, across states, and among scientists that increasing emissions of carbon dioxide, methane, and other greenhouse gases released into the earth's atmosphere are affecting the earth's climate.

(b)  There is further consensus that global climate change, national security, and energy dependence are a related set of global challenges.

(c)  The potential adverse effects of global climate change in the coming decades include extreme weather events, drought, a decline in air quality, rising sea levels and global temperatures, and exacerbation of challenges such as infectious disease and terrorism.

(d)  The state of the world's climate in the future largely depends on how global leaders react to global climate change now.

(e)  Many states and countries have reached across borders to collaborate and develop policies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, spur private investment in clean energy, and enhance energy security.

(f)  By not taking aggressive action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, this state is missing out on an opportunity to become a global leader in protecting against global climate change and risks exposing the state's economy and its citizens to unmitigated consequences.

(g)  Global warming will have deleterious effects on the state's labor productivity, infrastructure, and industries, including agriculture, water, energy, forestry, and tourism.

(h)  Actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, such as energy conservation and development of renewable energy sources, may have multiple benefits, including economic development, job creation, cost savings, and improved air quality in and beyond the boundaries of this state.

(i)  Recognizing the potential threat to the environment, economy, and national security, it is the intent of the Texas Legislature to create a global climate change commission committed to working toward mitigating the impacts of global climate change nationally and internationally.

SECTION 2.  DEFINITIONS. In this Act:

(1)  "Commission" means the Global Climate Change Commission.

(2)  "Greenhouse gas" has the meaning assigned by Section 403.028, Government Code.

(3)  "Institution of higher education" has the meaning assigned by Section 61.003, Education Code.

SECTION 3.  COMMISSION CREATED; COMPOSITION. (a) The Global Climate Change Commission is created.

(b)  The commission is composed of:

(1)  one member appointed by the governor;

(2)  one member appointed by the lieutenant governor;

(3)  one member appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives;

(4)  one member appointed by the most senior member of the minority party of the house of representatives;

(5)  one member appointed by the most senior member of the minority party of the senate; and

(6)  the following members appointed evenly between the governor, lieutenant governor, and speaker of the house of representatives:

(A)  a representative of the public energy sector;

(B)  a representative of rural electric cooperatives;

(C)  a representative of the municipal electricity sector;

(D)  two representatives of separate nonprofit environmental organizations;

(E)  three scientists at separate institutions of higher education, including one climatologist;

(F)  an economist from an institution of higher education;

(G)  a representative of business and industry;

(H)  a representative of the manufacturing or mining industry;

(I)  a representative of the agriculture or forestry industry;

(J)  a representative of the fossil fuel industry;

(K)  a representative from the Health and Human Services Commission;

(L)  a representative from the Texas Military Preparedness Commission;

(M)  a representative from the Texas Division of Emergency Management;

(N)  a representative from the Texas Water Development Board; and

(O)  three representatives of the public.

SECTION 4.  PRESIDING OFFICER; MEETINGS; COMPENSATION. (a) The commission shall elect one of its members to serve as presiding officer.

(b)  The commission shall meet at least quarterly and at the call of the presiding officer.

(c)  A commission member is not entitled to receive compensation for service on the commission but is entitled to reimbursement for travel expenses incurred by the member while conducting the business of the commission, as provided by the General Appropriations Act.

SECTION 5.  DUTIES OF COMMISSION. (a) Not later than September 1, 2020, the commission shall prepare and deliver a comprehensive inventory and forecast of greenhouse gas emissions in this state from 2000 to 2030 to the governor, lieutenant governor, speaker of the house of representatives, state energy conservation office, and Texas Commission on Environmental Quality.

(b)  The commission shall:

(1)  design a multiregional, multistate, and multilateral approach to:

(A)  reduce greenhouse gas emissions;

(B)  reduce energy demands;

(C)  protect public health; and

(D)  increase public and private investment in clean energy, energy efficiency, and sustainable infrastructure;

(2)  assess the impact of global climate change on important matters of national security;

(3)  develop and recommend a portfolio of feasible and affordable policy options to reduce this state's vulnerability to the predictable effects of global climate change; and

(4)  develop for inclusion in the state hazard mitigation plan submitted under Section 322, Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. Section 5165), a strategy that considers the impact of climate change on risks from natural hazards.

(c)  The commission shall submit a preliminary written report of its activities and progress under Subsection (b) of this section to the governor, lieutenant governor, speaker of the house of representatives, state energy conservation office, and Texas Commission on Environmental Quality not later than September 1, 2020.

(d)  The commission shall submit a final written report of its activities and recommendations under Subsection (b) of this section on or before January 1, 2021, to the governor, lieutenant governor, state energy conservation office, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, and legislature, including the state affairs committee of each house of the legislature. The report must include a comprehensive and coordinated plan for adapting this state's economy, infrastructure, security policies, and public health policies to:

(1)  address the consequences of global climate change; and

(2)  ensure continued economic global competitiveness.

SECTION 6.  APPOINTMENTS. As soon as possible after the effective date of this Act:

(1)  the governor, lieutenant governor, speaker of the house of representatives, and members of the legislature described by Section 3 of this Act shall make the appointments required by that section; and

(2)  the governor, lieutenant governor, and speaker of the house of representatives or their designees shall meet to apportion the appointments under Section 3(b)(6) of this Act.

SECTION 7.  EXPIRATION. This Act expires and the commission is abolished March 1, 2021.

SECTION 8.  EFFECTIVE DATE. This Act takes effect September 1, 2019.