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A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the creation of a work group to study the benefits of coal-to-nuclear electric generating facility conversion.

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

SECTION 1.  DEFINITION. In this Act, "work group" means the coal-to-nuclear conversion work group established under Section 2 of this Act.

SECTION 2.  WORK GROUP FORMATION AND ADMINISTRATION. (a) The coal-to-nuclear conversion work group is established and composed of 16 members with:

(1)  one member of the senate appointed by the lieutenant governor;

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

(3)  two members representing institutions of higher education appointed by the governor;

(4)  one ex officio member representing the Public Utility Commission of Texas appointed by the governor;

(5)  one ex officio member representing the independent organization certified under Section 39.151, Utilities Code, for the ERCOT power region appointed by the governor; and

(6)  10 members of the public who have knowledge and experience in nuclear engineering, nuclear safety, energy policy, or economic analysis, and who are appointed as follows:

(A)  five members appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives; and

(B)  five members appointed by the lieutenant governor.

(b)  The governor shall designate members of the work group appointed under Subsection (a)(1) and Subsection (a)(2) of this section to serve as chair and vice chair of the work group.

(c)  The work group shall meet at the call of its chair.

(d)  The work group may form committees for the efficient operation of the work group, at the discretion of the chair of the work group. The chair of the work group shall appoint the presiding officer of each committee. The presiding officer of a committee may invite other members of the work group to serve on the committee. A committee may consult with subject matter experts.

(e)  The work group may adopt rules, procedures, and policies as necessary or convenient to administer this Act and fulfill the responsibilities of the work group.

(f)  A member of the work group may not receive compensation for serving on the work group but is entitled to reimbursement for expenses incurred by the member in the performance of official duties as a member of the work group as provided by the General Appropriations Act.

(g)  The senate and the house of representatives shall provide administrative support to the work group as necessary to implement this Act.

SECTION 3.  WORK GROUP DUTIES. (a) The work group shall:

(1)  study the benefits of converting sites in this state with coal-fired electric generating facilities to use nuclear electric generating facilities instead; and

(2)  develop a model plan for implementing coal-to-nuclear conversion to provide affordable and sustainable power in this state.

(b)  In developing the model plan, the work group shall:

(1)  conduct a comprehensive review of research and information on coal-to-nuclear conversion and related issues;

(2)  engage in stakeholder outreach to gather feedback and input from the public, industry, state agencies, and relevant organizations;

(3)  identify the potential benefits of coal-to-nuclear conversion, including cost-effectiveness, energy security, and reduced environmental impact;

(4)  assess the economic viability of coal-to-nuclear conversion and provide recommendations on financing and cost-effectiveness; and

(5)  consider the regulatory framework and requirements for coal-to-nuclear conversion and provide recommendations for streamlining the conversion process.

(c)  Not later than October 31, 2024, the work group shall submit to each standing committee of the senate and house of representatives with oversight jurisdiction over environmental concerns or electric utilities a report that includes the model plan developed under this section and any findings or recommendations made by a committee formed under Section 2(d) of this Act.

SECTION 4.  APPOINTMENTS. As soon as practicable, but not later than October 1, 2023, the governor, lieutenant governor, and speaker of the house of representatives shall appoint the members of the work group.

SECTION 5.  INITIAL MEETING. Not later than November 1, 2023, the work group shall hold its initial meeting at the call of the chair of the work group.

SECTION 6.  EXPIRATION. This Act expires and the work group is abolished June 30, 2025.

SECTION 7.  EFFECTIVE DATE. This Act takes effect September 1, 2023.