

Dear Colleagues,

In 2013 the legislature passed E2SSB 5802, which provided the foundation for the Climate Legislative Executive Workgroup.

For the first time, a legislative and executive group was charged with the task of assessing CO2 reduction policies with regard to potential economic impacts, potential environmental impacts, and to rate each proposal on a cost per ton of carbon reduction basis.

The Workgroup agreed not to debate the science of various climate change theories, but to focus on fiscal, environmental, and real world impacts of proposals to reduce carbon in Washington in accord with the non-binding goals set by the legislature in 2008.

Legislators need accurate, non-biased information on the actual potential impacts of carbon reduction proposals. This is what the Workgroup attempted to provide.

The Workgroup process was hindered by the large scope of the issue at hand, limited time frames, vastly different projected impacts from different consultant studies, lack of generally agreed-to standards for measuring CO2 production, and difficulty in measuring existing industry carbon reductions.

Several items emerged during the process that legislators need to be aware of:

1. Washington is a low carbon producing state due to our existing hydro and nuclear portfolio.
2. Reductions of CO2 in Washington to meet the non-binding targets created in 2008 could have dramatic impacts on manufacturing jobs and energy prices in Washington.
3. Technology, not politics, is the limiting factor to many new types of energy.
4. Opportunities do exist to reduce carbon emissions without increasing energy costs or increasing costs to the taxpayers of Washington.
5. More work needs to be done to provide legislators with the data necessary to make informed decisions.

After one year of service to the people of Washington on the Workgroup, we offer the following report to legislature.

Senator Doug Ericksen

Representative Shelly Short