

CS FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 196(RES)

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY THE HOUSE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Offered: 5/17/03

Referred: Today's Calendar

Sponsor(s): REPRESENTATIVES BERKOWITZ, Gara, Guttenberg, Kerttula, Hawker, Kott, Wilson, Lynn

A BILL

FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

1 **"An Act relating to carbon sequestration; and providing for an effective date."**

2 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

3 * **Section 1.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section
4 to read:

5 LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS; INTENT. (a) The legislature finds that

6 (1) increasing levels of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases in the
7 atmosphere have led to a growing interest in national and international forums for
8 implementing measures to slow and reverse the buildup of these atmospheric gases; these
9 measures may potentially include the establishment of systems of trading in credits for
10 adoption of practices, technologies, or other measures that decrease net emissions of carbon
11 dioxide;

12 (2) improved agricultural, forest, and soil management and conservation
13 practices and other methods of stewardship of soil and other land resources have great
14 potential to increase carbon sequestration on state and private lands and help offset carbon
15 dioxide emissions from other sectors of the economy; and

1 (3) it is in the interests of the state, private landowners, and the public in
 2 general that the commissioner of natural resources document and quantify carbon
 3 sequestration and greenhouse gas emissions reductions associated with agricultural, forestry,
 4 and soil management systems and land uses occurring on state and private land in Alaska.

5 (b) It is the intent of the legislature that efforts to quantify and verify carbon
 6 sequestration on state and private lands enhance the ability of the state to participate in any
 7 system of carbon sequestration marketing or trading.

8 * **Sec. 2.** AS 44.37 is amended by adding new sections to read:

9 **Sec. 44.37.200. Carbon sequestration studies and recommendations.** (a)

10 The commissioner of natural resources, in consultation with the commissioner of
 11 environmental conservation, shall conduct research, surveys, and appropriate studies
 12 relating to carbon sequestration.

13 (b) The commissioner of natural resources, in consultation with the
 14 commissioner of environmental conservation, shall

15 (1) prepare the reports required by this chapter and conduct the
 16 assessment required under AS 44.37.210;

17 (2) recommend policies or programs to enhance the ability of the state
 18 to participate in systems of carbon trading; the recommendations must include
 19 potential policies or programs designed to optimize economic benefits to private
 20 landowners participating in carbon transactions; the policies or programs may include
 21 identifying existing nonprofit organizations or other public or private entities or the
 22 potential of creating nonprofit organizations or other public or private entities capable
 23 of serving as assemblers of carbon credits or as intermediaries on behalf of producers
 24 in carbon-trading systems;

25 (3) encourage the production of educational and advisory materials
 26 regarding carbon sequestration on state and private land and participation in systems
 27 of carbon or greenhouse emissions trading;

28 (4) identify and recommend areas of research needed to better
 29 understand and quantify the process of carbon sequestration; and

30 (5) review the carbon sequestration programs and policies of other
 31 states.

1 **Sec. 44.37.210. Assessment by the commissioner.** (a) In consultation with
 2 the commissioner of environmental conservation, the commissioner shall assess state
 3 and private land in the state for past carbon sequestration and future carbon
 4 sequestration potential. The assessment shall seek to quantify carbon sequestration
 5 associated with agricultural, forest, soil, and land management systems in this state.
 6 From time to time, the commissioner may update the findings as advancements in
 7 understanding of the processes of carbon sequestration and new data become
 8 available.

9 (b) The assessment required under this section shall be conducted in a manner
 10 that provides a means for the state and owners of private land to estimate past and
 11 future net carbon sequestration resulting from agricultural and forestry practices,
 12 conservation measures, management systems, and land uses.

13 **Sec. 44.37.220. Definitions.** In AS 44.37.200 - 44.37.220,

14 (1) "carbon sequestration" means the long-term storage of carbon in
 15 forests, soils, the ocean, and other carbon sinks;

16 (2) "commissioner" means the commissioner of natural resources.

17 * **Sec. 3.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to
 18 read:

19 REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE. On or before the first day of the Second Regular
 20 Session of the Twenty-Third Alaska State Legislature, the commissioner of natural resources,
 21 in consultation with the commissioner of environmental conservation, shall prepare a report to
 22 the legislature. The report must include a discussion of

23 (1) the potential for, and potential forms of, greenhouse emissions regulation;

24 (2) the potential for development of a system or systems of carbon emissions
 25 trading or markets for carbon sequestered on state and private land;

26 (3) agricultural, forest, and soil management systems or land uses that increase
 27 stored soil carbon;

28 (4) methods for measuring and modeling net carbon sequestration associated
 29 with various agricultural, forestry, and soil practices, management systems, or land uses
 30 occurring on state and private land;

31 (5) areas of scientific uncertainty with respect to quantifying and

- 1 understanding carbon sequestration associated with soil and forest management activities;
- 2 (6) recommendations developed under AS 44.37.200;
- 3 (7) the assessment as described in AS 44.37.210.
- 4 * **Sec. 4.** This Act takes effect July 1, 2003.