
HOUSE BILL 2143

State of Washington

68th Legislature

2024 Regular Session

By Representatives Ramel and Hackney

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1 AN ACT Relating to providing information related to the human
2 rights records of nations that export crude oil to Washington; adding
3 a new section to chapter 28B.20 RCW; adding a new section to chapter
4 43.21A RCW; and creating a new section.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature finds that the price
7 of motor fuel is an insufficient measure of the collective cost of
8 our energy choices. In the face of growing evidence of impending
9 climate disaster driven by fossil fuel consumption, the legislature
10 has adopted policies to steadily reduce our reliance on fossil fuels,
11 and to incentivize the adoption of alternatives. As consumers in
12 Washington become less and less dependent on oil consumption, our
13 state would benefit from a deeper understanding of the places and
14 processes involved in the production of Washington energy. It is
15 important to the legislature that we and the people of Washington
16 understand the social impacts of crude oil consumption as well as its
17 environmental impact.

18 (2) The United States currently prohibits crude oil imports from
19 Russia on the basis that Russia is engaged in an unjustified,
20 unprovoked, and unconscionable war against Ukraine in violation of
21 international law. Although the current ban on crude oil imports from

1 Russia is based on Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine, according to
2 reports from human rights watch, Russia has also engaged in, and
3 continues to engage in, a host of additional human rights abuses,
4 including the assassination and imprisonment of political opponents,
5 restrictions on the freedoms of expression and assembly, and the
6 repression of racial minorities. In 2021, the year before this ban
7 took effect, Washington imported nearly 10 million barrels of crude
8 oil from Russia. Similarly, the United States significantly limited
9 crude oil imports from Venezuela for multiple years, in recognition
10 of Venezuela's abuses of human rights and fundamental freedoms.
11 According to reports from human rights watch, Saudi Arabia, from
12 which Washington imported nearly eight million barrels of crude oil
13 in 2022, has engaged in multiple human rights abuses, including
14 violations of international humanitarian law in its air strikes of
15 Yemen, repression of women's rights, and the mistreatment of migrant
16 workers.

17 (3) The legislature finds that the University of Washington is
18 uniquely qualified to convene a symposium on the challenging, complex
19 questions surrounding the human rights cost of oil consumption in
20 Washington state. The University of Washington has the capacity to
21 convene the participants necessary for a thoughtful, informed
22 discussion of the human rights aspect of Washington's oil
23 consumption, including academic and policy experts on the primary oil
24 producing countries from which Washington obtains crude oil, experts
25 on human rights and the oil industry, and local stakeholders,
26 including residents, elected officials, tribal governments, and
27 environmental and human rights advocates.

28 (4) Because of the importance of this issue and of helping to
29 inform Washington residents of the human rights dimension of their
30 motor fuel purchases, it is the intent of the legislature to direct
31 the University of Washington to convene a symposium on the human
32 rights records of the nations that export crude oil to Washington
33 state.

34 (5) The legislature further finds that the department of ecology
35 already gathers adequate information on the sourcing of crude oil
36 used in Washington and that further dissemination of this information
37 to policymakers and consumers would provide important and actionable
38 information.

39 (6) It is the hope of the legislature that as Washington uses
40 less and less crude oil in the future, providing ready access to

1 reliable information about the human rights records associated with
2 countries that export crude oil to Washington will help consumers, if
3 they choose, to avoid oil sourced from countries where oil sales may
4 support serious and concerning human rights abuses.

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 28B.20
6 RCW to read as follows:

7 (1) The University of Washington shall convene a biennial
8 symposium related to the human rights records of nations that export
9 crude oil to Washington.

10 (2) The symposium must be open to the public, either in person or
11 virtually.

12 (3) The topics that the University of Washington should address
13 in the human rights symposium include, but are not limited to:

14 (a) The human rights implications of Washington's consumption of
15 crude oil;

16 (b) The global sources of the crude oil refined in Washington and
17 how the sources of crude oil refined in Washington have changed in
18 recent years;

19 (c) The human rights records of the countries of origin of crude
20 oil refined in Washington and how revenues derived from the
21 extraction and export of crude oil impacts the human rights records
22 of these countries;

23 (d) As Washington reduces its consumption of oil, whether, and in
24 what fashion, purchasers of motor fuel and other products derived
25 from crude oil should prioritize purchases from certain countries
26 over others based on human rights considerations; and

27 (e) Potential policies at the state and federal level that would
28 help to ensure that core democratic values, including human rights,
29 are upheld in Washington's oil consumption.

30 (4) Following the symposium, the University of Washington shall
31 publish a written report that includes both a brief accounting of the
32 human rights records of the primary countries from which Washington
33 obtains crude oil, as well as summaries of the deliberations at the
34 symposium.

35 (5) The University of Washington must develop and maintain a
36 publicly accessible website on which it publishes the proceedings of
37 each human rights symposium, including the written report prepared
38 pursuant to subsection (4) of this section.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 43.21A
2 RCW to read as follows:

3 (1) The department must develop and maintain a publicly
4 accessible website on which it publishes a summary of information
5 related to crude oil imported to Washington.

6 (2) The summary that the department publishes must include, but
7 is not limited to, the following information:

8 (a) The name of each nation from which each refinery operator in
9 Washington has imported crude oil; and

10 (b) The volume of crude oil that each refinery operator has
11 received from each nation from which it has imported crude oil.

12 (3) In the course of gathering and updating the oil import data
13 needed to maintain the website developed pursuant to this section,
14 the department shall draw upon those sources that it determines to
15 offer the most accurate and current data including, but not limited
16 to, the United States energy information administration.

17 (4) In addition to the summary of information related to crude
18 oil imported by each refinery operator in Washington, the department
19 must indicate on the website that the University of Washington
20 conducts a biennial symposium related to the human rights records of
21 nations that export oil to Washington. The department must provide on
22 the website a link to the University of Washington's website
23 dedicated to the proceedings of the human rights symposium.

24 (5) When the department updates the website established pursuant
25 to this section, whether in relation to crude oil imported by
26 Washington's refineries or in relation to the University of
27 Washington's human rights symposium, the department shall engage in
28 publicity activities that are reasonably calculated to communicate
29 the updates to Washington residents.

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