



KING COUNTY

1200 King County Courthouse
516 Third Avenue
Seattle, WA 98104

Signature Report

June 10, 2008

Motion 12795

Proposed No. 2008-0267.2

Sponsors Dunn, Patterson, Constantine,
Hague, Phillips, Gossett, Ferguson
and Lambert

1 A MOTION relating to King County's use of biofuel blends
2 in transit and fleet vehicles; mandating a report on the life-
3 cycle and economic impacts of utilizing biofuels, and
4 examining the efficacy of alternative climate change
5 mitigation strategies for King County's transportation
6 emissions sources.

7
8 WHEREAS, the King County Climate Plan and Climate Report and the
9 executive-proposed King County Comprehensive Plan 2008 update include policy goals
10 for reducing King County's greenhouse gas emissions. As part of these goals, King
11 County must collaborate with local governments in the region to reduce overall emissions
12 to eighty percent below the year 2007 levels by 2050, and

13 WHEREAS, of the approximately 420,000 metric tons of carbon dioxide
14 equivalent that the King County government is estimated to have emitted in 2003,
15 approximately 96,000 metric tons were produced by transit buses. In total, transportation
16 accounts for thirty-eight percent of total greenhouse gas emissions created by King
17 County government operations, and

18 WHEREAS, hybrid and other new fuel-efficient technologies offer significant
19 promise as a means of reducing vehicle emissions, including carbon dioxide, and

20 WHEREAS, in March 2006, King County Executive Ron Sims signed Executive
21 Order PUT 7-5 calling for a substantial increase in the biofuel mix utilized by the
22 county's diesel vehicle fleet, from five percent ("B5") to twenty percent ("B20"). King
23 County currently utilizes the B20 biofuel blend, and

24 WHEREAS, biofuels have come under increasing scrutiny by some mainstream
25 peer-reviewed science journals and other experts. The development and utilization of
26 food-based biofuels might have created two unintended consequences. First, some
27 biofuels may cause more net greenhouse gas emissions than fossil fuels. Second, some
28 biofuel production and usage may be linked to increasing worldwide food prices, and

29 WHEREAS, the United States Environmental Protection Agency is conducting
30 research into the full life-cycle impacts of biofuel production, which include total
31 environmental impacts beyond carbon emissions. A life-cycle analysis measures
32 greenhouse gas emissions throughout the land-clearing, planting, growth and harvesting
33 phases of the fuel biomass. Additionally, it covers the manufacture, transportation,
34 distribution and end-use of the end product, and

35 WHEREAS, King County has joined the Chicago Climate Exchange and
36 committed to annually reduce its carbon emissions or purchase equivalent carbon offsets
37 at market rates. Furthermore, one strategy that the county has engaged in to reduce
38 emissions is to use biofuel in its vehicles, and

39 WHEREAS, the market price of carbon futures, diesel fuel and biodiesel fuel are
40 increasing at unprecedented rates. These external economic drivers impact the financial

41 risk and emissions mitigation strategies associated with the county meeting its carbon
42 reduction commitments through the use of biofuel, and

43 WHEREAS, additional costs, risks and resources may be unknown for current
44 and future usage of biofuel blends due to rapidly accumulating scientific knowledge;

45 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT MOVED by the Council of King County:

46 The executive shall transmit to the council, by filing eleven copies of the report
47 with the clerk of the council no later than December 31, 2008, for distribution to all
48 councilmembers, a report analyzing the impacts of biodiesel fuel currently used by King
49 County Metro and other County vehicles. The report shall address the following:

50 A. The economic impact on King County of utilizing biofuel in its vehicle fleet
51 and meeting its Chicago Climate Exchange membership commitments;

52 B. Based on federal and other available relevant research, King County's net
53 greenhouse gas emission-equivalent gains or losses from major greenhouse gases such as
54 water vapor, nitrogen oxides, and carbon dioxide, throughout the entire life-cycle of
55 biofuel production and usage in vehicles;

56 C. Recommendations for alternatives to utilizing food-based biofuel sources in
57 the King County vehicle fleet, including technologies such as hybrid fuel cells, plug-in
58 hybrid electric vehicles ("PHEVs"), battery electric vehicles and additional carbon offset
59 purchases, and the evaluation of local and regional alternative fuel supply options; and

60 D. A forecast analysis of King County's future carbon reduction commitments,
61 goals and revenues, as guided by the 2007 Climate Plan.

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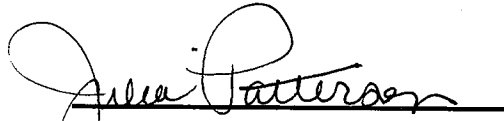
Motion 12795 was introduced on 5/12/2008 and passed by the Metropolitan King County Council on 6/9/2008, by the following vote:

Yes: 9 - Ms. Patterson, Mr. Dunn, Mr. Constantine, Ms. Lambert, Mr. von Reichbauer, Mr. Ferguson, Mr. Gossett, Mr. Phillips and Ms. Hague

No: 0

Excused: 0

KING COUNTY COUNCIL
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON



Julia Patterson, Chair

ATTEST:



Anne Noris, Clerk of the Council

Attachments None