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## OLR Bill Analysis

### sSB 1014

#### ***AN ACT CONCERNING THE DEFINITION OF "RISE IN SEA LEVEL" AND CONSIDERATION OF SEA LEVEL CHANGE SCENARIOS.***

##### **SUMMARY:**

This bill requires the state and municipalities to consider the federal National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) sea level change scenarios published in its Technical Report OAR CPO-1 when developing certain plans and programs (see BACKGROUND). Specifically, it requires the state to consider these scenarios when developing the state (1) plan of conservation and development (Plan of C&D) and (2) civil preparedness plan and program. Municipalities must consider these scenarios when preparing a municipal (1) plan of conservation and development and (2) evacuation or hazard mitigation plan. The bill requires UConn's Marine Sciences Division to update the NOAA sea level change scenarios at least once every 10 years.

The bill also specifies that, under the Coastal Management Act (CMA), "rise in sea level" means the average of the most recent equivalent per decade rise in tidal and coastal waters surface level based on data from NOAA's Bridgeport and New London tide gauges. Currently, it is the average as documented for an annual, decadal, or centenary period at any state sites specified in NOAA publications.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

#### **APPLYING NOAA SEA LEVEL CHANGE SCENARIOS**

##### ***Plans of Conservation and Development***

**State.** Under current law, the state Office of Policy and Management (OPM) must consider the risks associated with increased coastal erosion from a rise in sea level, as defined by the CMA, when revising the state's Plan of C&D. The bill requires OPM to consider

instead the risks from increased coastal erosion as anticipated in sea level change scenarios published in NOAA's Technical Report OAR CPO-1. By law, the state Plan of C&D is revised every five years.

***Municipal.*** The law generally requires municipal planning commissions to adopt a municipal plan of conservation and development at least once every 10 years, and regularly review and maintain it. These plans are a statement of policies, goals, and standards for the municipality's physical and economic development. The bill requires the commissions or special committees appointed by them to consider NOAA's sea level change scenarios in its Technical Report OAR CPO-1 when preparing the plan.

### ***Civil Preparedness Plan and Program***

By law, the commissioner of emergency services and public protection must prepare a comprehensive plan and program for civil preparedness, subject to the governor's approval. The commissioner may amend the plan and program as needed. Upon the bill's passage, the state civil preparedness plan and program must consider the sea level change scenarios from NOAA's Technical Report OAR CPO-1.

### ***Municipal Evacuation or Hazard Mitigation Plan***

Also upon the bill's passage, municipalities must consider the sea level change scenarios from NOAA's Technical Report OAR CPO-1 when preparing an evacuation or hazard mitigation plan. By law, "hazard mitigation" includes such activities as actions taken to reduce or eliminate long-term risk to human life, infrastructure, and property from natural hazards (e.g., flooding, high winds, and wild fires).

### ***UConn Update***

Under the bill, UConn's Marine Sciences Division must update NOAA's sea level change scenarios from its Technical Report OAR CPO-1 at least once every 10 years. At least 90 days before any update to the scenarios, the division must conduct at least one public hearing on the update. The division must do the update and conduct the hearing within available resources.

**BACKGROUND**

***NOAA Technical Report OAR CPO-1***

The December 6, 2012 NOAA Technical Report OAR CPO-1 titled, "Global Sea Level Rise Scenarios for the United States National Climate Assessment," provides sea level rise scenarios to help experts and stakeholders analyze vulnerability, impacts, and adaptation strategies. It identifies four global mean sea level rise scenarios ranging from eight inches to 6.6 feet by 2100. The report specifies that the scenarios should be used with local and regional information on climatic, physical, ecological, and biological processes and the coastal communities' culture and economy.

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Environment Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 27 Nay 1 (03/25/2013)