

SENATE BILL REPORT

SJM 8020

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Ecology & Parks, March 1, 1995

Brief Description: Concerning federal funds for the cleanup of the Hanford waste disposal site.

Sponsors: Senators Loveland, Hale, Rasmussen, A. Anderson, Newhouse, Bauer, Snyder, Morton, Sutherland, Finkbeiner, Hochstatter, Owen, Hargrove, Rinehart, Spanel, Drew, Sheldon, Fraser, Sellar and McDonald.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Ecology & Parks: 2/28/95, 3/1/95 [DPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ECOLOGY & PARKS

Majority Report: That Substitute Joint Memorial No. 8020 be substituted therefor, and the substitute memorial do pass.

Signed by Senators Fraser, Chair; C. Anderson, Vice Chair; McAuliffe, McDonald, Spanel and Swecker.

Staff: David Danner (786-7784)

Background: Two-thirds of the volume of nuclear waste in the United States is stored at the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE's) Hanford Site in central Washington. The federal government agreed to clean up the site, and DOE has already spent millions for environmental cleanup at Hanford.

The U.S. General Accounting Office has estimated that up to 40 percent of the cleanup funds expended to date have been spent on administrative costs, legal fees, or regulatory compliance activities.

The DOE has proposed to reduce cleanup funds available for Hanford. However, it has proposed no corresponding reduction in regulatory obligations. The federal government has announced that 4,500 jobs will be eliminated as a result of DOE's proposed funding cuts.

Summary of Substitute Bill: The federal government is asked to work with state and local officials in Washington State to eliminate unnecessary regulatory costs so that adequate funding will be available. Congress is asked to begin immediately to construct facilities necessary to implement Hanford cleanup, and to maintain its commitment to all key milestones of the "Tri-Party Agreement."

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: Language is added asking Congress to begin construction of cleanup facilities and to maintain its commitment to the "Tri-Party Agreement."

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Testimony For: Regulatory costs are depleting capital construction funds for Hanford Site cleanup. Delay in construction of Hanford cleanup facilities will result in higher regulatory costs and less available funding for construction. The federal government should maintain its commitment to eliminating the nuclear wastes created by its program.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Senator Valoria Loveland, prime sponsor.