

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2768

*As Reported By House Committee on:
Environmental Affairs*

Title: An act relating to department of ecology technical assistance officers.

Brief Description: Allowing technical assistance officers for the department of ecology.

Sponsor(s): Representatives Horn, Rust, Bowman, D. Sommers, Van Luven, Neher, Bray, Edmondson, Brough, Wynne, Brekke and Tate.

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Environmental Affairs, February 6, 1992, DPS.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS**

Majority Report: *The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass.* Signed by 13 members: Representatives Rust, Chair; Valle, Vice Chair; Horn, Ranking Minority Member; Edmondson, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Bray; Brekke; G. Fisher; J. Kohl; Neher; Pruitt; D. Sommers; Sprenkle; and Van Luven.

Staff: Rick Anderson (786-7114).

Background: The Department of Ecology is responsible for enforcing the state's air, water, and solid and hazardous waste laws. In general, the department is required to enforce violations when they occur.

In 1988, state law was enacted directing the Department of Ecology to develop a waste reduction program to provide technical assistance to entities interested in reducing the amount of solid or hazardous waste they generated. The law specifically prohibited employees of the program from issuing citations, notices, or civil penalties.

Summary of Substitute Bill: The Department of Ecology is authorized to appoint one or more technical assistance officers to provide on-site consultation to businesses for the purpose of helping businesses comply with environmental regulations. The technical assistance officer may report

violations to others within the department, but cannot issue violations unless persons or property are at risk.

The state, department, and technical officers are not liable for technical assistance given or for lack of technical assistance.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The substitute bill makes technical and grammatical changes; these changes have no effect on any of the substantive provisions of the bill.

Fiscal Note: Requested January 24, 1992.

Effective Date of Substitute Bill: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: The bill will encourage businesses to contact the department to improve their compliance with environmental regulations.

Testimony Against: None.

Witnesses: Gary Smith, Independent Business Association (pro); and Narda Pierce, Department of Ecology (pro).