

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5891

AS REPORTED BY COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES,
MARCH 5, 1991

Brief Description: Exempting households where persons over the age of sixty-two reside from certain woodstove restrictions.

SPONSORS: Senators Oke, Snyder, Metcalf, Patterson, McMullen, Owen, Rasmussen, Anderson, Matson, Bauer, Nelson, Conner, Bailey, McCaslin, Hansen, Craswell and Amondson.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5891 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Metcalf, Chairman; Oke, Vice Chairman; Amondson, Barr, Conner, Owen, Patterson, and Snyder.

Staff: Atsushi Kiuchi (786-7708)

Hearing Dates: March 5, 1991

BACKGROUND:

The state Clean Air Act regulates residential solid fuel burning devices and solid fuel heating devices (woodstoves and fireplaces) that burn wood, coal or other nongaseous or nonfluid fuels.

The use of these burning or heating devices may be banned in a residence or commercial establishment which has an "adequate source of heat" without burning wood.

An "adequate source of heat" is defined as the ability to maintain 70 degrees fahrenheit at a point three feet above the floor in all normally inhabited areas of a dwelling (WAC 173-433-030).

Currently the "adequate source of heat" definition provides the only exemption from the woodstove or fireplace burning bans.

SUMMARY:

Persons over 62 years old who burn wood as a source of heat in their residences are exempt from certain provisions of state and local woodstove burning bans. The exemptions are:

- (1) During a second stage of impaired air quality (neither uncertified nor certified stoves may be used) declared by the Department of Ecology or local air pollution control agency; and

- (2) During any regional or statewide air pollution "episode" declared by the Department of Ecology.

EFFECT OF PROPOSED SUBSTITUTE:

The exemptions from the woodstove burning bans apply to the first stage of impaired air quality and the second stage of impaired air quality as declared by local and state air quality authorities.

When an air pollution "episode" is declared by the Department of Ecology, all use of wood stoves shall be banned.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: none requested

TESTIMONY FOR:

Senior citizens with special health problems and low income families would benefit from the exemptions to the burning bans.

TESTIMONY AGAINST:

The exemptions would be detrimental to air quality during times when weather conditions are the worst. Senior citizens are among those most adversely affected by impaired air quality.

TESTIFIED: Bruce Wishart, Sierra Club (con)