

SENATE BILL REPORT

SJM 8020

AS PASSED SENATE, MARCH 6, 1991

Brief Description: Concerning displaced timber workers.

SPONSORS: Senators Owen, Snyder, Conner, McDonald, Johnson, Amondson, Sutherland, Madsen, Rasmussen, McCaslin, Anderson, Vognild, L. Smith, Bailey, von Reichbauer and McMullen.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE & LABOR

Staff: Patrick Woods (786-7430)

BACKGROUND:

Recent changes in the management of federal forest lands due to policies concerning the spotted owl in old growth forests have resulted in a major decline in timber supplies. The forest products industry is an integral part of the state's economy directly employing in excess of 60,000 persons, ranking it as Washington's second largest manufacturing industry. This reduction in timber supplies is expected to result in considerable job losses adversely impacting the economy of the state and in particular rural timber dependent communities throughout Washington.

SUMMARY:

The President of the United States, the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives and members of Congress are respectfully petitioned as follows: to change federal Forest Service management policies leading to the loss of 20,000 timber related jobs in Washington State due to a decline in federal timber supplies; that most of these related job losses are located in rural areas of Washington and displaced timber workers often have few viable employment options; the United States government has in the past been willing to help retrain other groups of workers adversely affected by federal decisions, including coal miners impacted by the federal Clean Air Act and defense workers impacted by defense spending cuts; and training programs currently available to displaced timber workers are not adequate to meet the emergency needs.

The memorial requests that the Congress pass a Timber Workers' Fairness Act that will provide adequate benefits to timber workers impacted by federal decisions. The legislation should contain the following components: a training program of adequate duration to assist workers in gaining family wage jobs; training allowances to help families through the training program, allowing individuals eligible for unemployment insurance to receive an extension of up to 52

weeks if participating in training; and support services to assist in child care, transportation and emergency medical services.

It is resolved that copies of the memorial be immediately transmitted to the President of the United States, to the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House and members of the Congress.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: none requested