

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5895

AS OF FEBRUARY 26, 1993

Brief Description: Creating the environmental science advisory board.

SPONSORS: Senators Fraser, Deccio, Moore, Talmadge and Sutherland

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ECOLOGY & PARKS

Staff: Shannon Murphy (786-7483)

Hearing Dates: March 1, 1993

BACKGROUND:

The Science Advisory Board was established on the federal level to advise the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on methods to achieve an integrated approach to important environmental issues. The board was established after it was discovered that various programs within the EPA and other federal agencies were found to be working on similar projects without coordination. The mission of the board was to assess the range of environmental problems and prioritize the most serious of problems. The individuals appointed to the board are persons with science and technological backgrounds. The board also advises the EPA on the scientific methods and data that provide the basis for regulatory standards on environmental quality issues.

It is felt by some that a similar advisory board with scientific expertise on environmental quality issues should be implemented on the state level.

SUMMARY:

The Environmental Science Advisory Board is created. The board is charged with advising the Legislature, the Governor and state agencies on the implementation of environmental quality laws. In addition, the board shall review existing and proposed environmental quality rules and polices.

The Governor shall appoint seven members to the board. Membership on the board shall be based on education, training, and experience in evaluating scientific and technical issues related to environmental quality. Three members shall serve three-year terms and four members shall serve two-year terms. Within 150 days of the effective date of the act, the board shall have an initial meeting. Within 60 days of the initial meeting, the board is required to develop a work plan to set priorities to carry out duties under this act.

The duties of the board under the act include: prioritization of environmental threats, development of methods to improve monitoring and data management for assessing environmental trends, and the development of methods to integrate scientific testing and evaluation in the assessment of risks to be considered in the adoption of environmental quality laws, rules and policies.

Beginning July 1, 1994 the board is required to assume the advisory duties of the science advisory board on hazardous waste cleanup established under the Model Toxics Control Act. In addition, the board shall advise the Department of Ecology on procedures for assessing and managing the risks associated with air contaminant emissions.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: requested February 24, 1993

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.