

SENATE BILL REPORT

SJM 8017

AS PASSED SENATE, MARCH 9, 1993

Brief Description: Requesting the United States Department of Energy to support the Fast Flux Test Facility at Hanford.

SPONSORS: Senators Jesernig and Loveland

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY & UTILITIES

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Sutherland, Chairman; Jesernig, Vice Chairman; Amondson, Hochstatter, McCaslin, Roach, A. Smith, Vognild, and West.

Staff: Phil Moeller (786-7445)

Hearing Dates: February 23, 1993; February 25, 1993

BACKGROUND:

The Fast Flux Test Facility (FFTF) is a United States Department of Energy advanced reactor located at Hanford. It has been on line since 1982 and has set several world records for efficient operation. It can be operated to produce certain isotopes used in medicine and outer-space research vessels. The FFTF has the potential to destroy some nuclear weapons and could potentially supply electricity to the regional power grid.

Originally the FFTF was designed to be part of a national effort to reprocess spent nuclear fuel. Partly because the reprocessing program was canceled, the operators of the FFTF have struggled with finding a long-term mission for the reactor.

Former Governor Gardner commissioned a team to market the potential of the FFTF to international interests. This team reported its analysis in March, 1992, concluding that there is significant support for the continued operation of the FFTF, both in the United States and in other countries.

SUMMARY:

The President, the Secretary of the United States Department of Energy, and selected members of Congress are asked to assure that the Department of Energy gives adequate financial and political support to the FFTF and that the reactor is given a long-term mission.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: none requested

TESTIMONY FOR:

This is a world class facility that should remain open. It is a state-of-the-art reactor that can undertake multiple missions simultaneously. Decision makers in Washington, D.C. should know the extent of support for the FFTF.

TESTIMONY AGAINST: None

TESTIFIED: Robert Dilger, Washington State Building Trades (pro)