

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1681

As Reported By House Committee On:
Agriculture & Ecology

Title: An act relating to solid waste.

Brief Description: Changing solid waste management provisions.

Sponsors: Representatives Clements, Linville and Cooke.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Agriculture & Ecology: 2/19/97, 3/3/97 [DPS].

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & ECOLOGY

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 11 members: Representatives Chandler, Chairman; Parlette, Vice Chairman; Schoesler, Vice Chairman; Linville, Ranking Minority Member; Anderson, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Cooper; Delvin; Koster; Mastin; Regala and Sump.

Staff: Rick Anderson (786-7114).

Background: The Solid Waste Advisory Committee provides advice to the Department of Ecology (DOE) on solid waste management issues. The committee is limited, by law, to 11 members and must include various interest groups. Appointments are made by the director of the DOE. The committee must meet at least four times per year. One of the committee's duties is to recommend recipients for a Governor's environmental excellence award. The DOE provides staff to the committee.

Legislation enacted in 1988 required the DOE to initiate a study of the various waste streams comprising solid waste and to identify the best management practices for each waste stream. Legislation enacted in 1989 required the DOE to develop a state solid waste plan to identify state, local, and private roles in managing solid wastes.

Summary of Substitute Bill: Legislative findings are made relating to the benefits of waste reduction and recycling.

The membership and role of the Solid Waste Advisory Committee is expanded. The committee may include up to 17 members. The directors of the Departments of Ecology, Community, Trade and Economic Development, the chair of the Utilities and Transportation Commission, and the chairs of the appropriate standing committees of the Legislature, or their designees, serve as ex officio members. Specific types of industries must be represented. Members must have policy expertise on waste management issues. Appointments are made by agency representatives. Members are appointed for two-year terms and may serve up to three terms. The committee must prepare annual recommendations to the DOE to develop and improve solid waste management policies. The committee is specifically authorized to form technical subcommittees. Staffing is provided by one of the three agencies represented through ex officio membership as available. Committee responsibilities relating to the Governor's environmental excellence award are terminated. A section that requires the DOE to staff the solid waste advisory committee is repealed.

The DOE, in conjunction with the Solid Waste Advisory Committee, is required to conduct a waste stream analysis and to revise the state solid waste management plan. The plan must improve the waste reduction and recycling of specific waste streams and identify legislative or statutory changes to improve waste reduction and recycling.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The original bill authorized the county legislative authority to impose a county-wide collection fee to pay for most costs associated with implementing a local solid waste plan. The substitute bill deletes this fee-setting provision. The original bill authorized the Solid Waste Advisory Committee to conduct a number of studies and pilot projects broadly related to waste reduction and recycling. The substitute bill narrows the scope of the study and changes the lead planning entity to the DOE.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: The state should take a more active role in recycling. Counties have the lead responsibility in developing solid waste plans. The fee is necessary to allow counties to recoup the costs of providing solid waste services. Recent court decisions regarding flow control and the general increase in recycling has made it difficult for counties with solid waste landfills to pay for the capital and operating costs of the landfills. Public support for recycling is very high. Any fee to implement solid waste plans should provide equity between residential and

commercial customers. Changes to the state Solid Waste Advisory Committee are necessary. Agencies other than the DOE should participate.

Testimony Against: The county-wide fee would put many cities in the position of having to pay fees for services that are not received. The use of the fee needs to be narrowed. Counties currently have funding mechanisms that are not being widely used.

Testified: Representative Jim Clements, sponsor (pro); Bill Vogler, Washington State Association of Counties (pro); Jeff Kelley-Clarke, Solid Waste of Snohomish County (pro); Ron Draggoo, Douglas County Solid Waste (pro); Elizabeth Schrag, Washington State Recycling Association (pro); Kathy Gerke, Association of Washington Cities (concerns); Teresa Osinski, Washington Utility Transportation Commission (con); Jeff Gage, Washington Organic Recycling Council (pro); Danielle Purnell, City of Seattle, Seattle Public Utilities (pro); John Paul Jones, Washington Refuse and Recycling Association (con); and Jan Gee, Washington Retail Association and Washington Food Industry (pro w/amendments).