SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5372

As Passed Senate, March 6, 1997

Title: An act relating to low-level radioactive waste disposal sites.

Brief Description: Limiting the number of times the maximum disposal fee at a radioactive waste disposal site may be adjusted.

Sponsors: Senators Finkbeiner, Brown, Hochstatter, Strannigan and Rossi; by request of Utilities & Transportation Commission.

Brief History:
Committee Activity: Energy & Utilities: 2/3/97, 2/13/97 [DP].
Passed Senate, 3/6/97, 48-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY & UTILITIES

Majority Report: Do pass.
Signed by Senators Finkbeiner, Chair; Hochstatter, Vice Chair; Brown, Jacobsen, Rossi, Strannigan.

Staff: Phil Moeller (786-7445)

Background: Washington is the host member state of a regional compact of states that are organized for the purpose of the disposal of commercial, low-level radioactive waste. Other states in the compact include Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Utah. Entities within this region that generate this type of waste have only one option for disposal-the private commercial disposal facility located at Hanford on land leased for 99 years from the United States government.

Anticipating that waste generators would only have this option, the Legislature enacted legislation in 1991 that required the site operator to be subject to rate regulation by the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (WUTC). The maximum disposal rates are adjusted in January and July each year to incorporate inflation and volume adjustments.

Summary of Bill: Maximum disposal rates for low-level radioactive waste are adjusted once per year.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: This streamlines the rate-setting process.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Teresa Osinski, WUTC (pro); Barry Bede, US Ecology (pro).