

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5888

As Passed Senate, March 15, 1997

Title: An act relating to authorizing the continuation of a special insuring agreement for workers' compensation for the United States department of energy.

Brief Description: Authorizing the continuation of a special insuring agreement for workers' compensation for the United States department of energy.

Sponsors: Senators Schow, Heavey and Hale; by request of Department of Labor & Industries.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Commerce & Labor: 2/24/97, 2/25/97 [DP].
Passed Senate, 3/15/97, 46-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE & LABOR

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Schow, Chair; Horn, Vice Chair; Franklin, Fraser, Heavey and Newhouse.

Staff: Jonathan Seib (786-7427)

Background: The United States Department of Energy self insures the workers' compensation claims of the employees of its contractors and subcontractors at the Hanford Nuclear Reservation. The department has an agreement with the state Department of Labor and Industries to be the claims administrator, for which the Department of Energy pays a fee. The authority for the Department of Labor and Industries to enter into this agreement is an uncodified state statute which conditions the agreement on the existence of a national emergency. There is concern that since there is no national emergency, the authority for the agreement has lapsed.

Summary of Bill: Current law authorizing the Department of Labor and Industries to administer workers' compensation claims for the United States Department of Energy on the Hanford Nuclear Reservation is updated and codified. Obsolete language is removed, and the Department of Labor and Industries is given more flexibility in carrying out its administrative duties. The section of law is repealed which conditions the authority to enter into this agreement on the existence of a national emergency.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: This bill will remove legal questions regarding the authority of the Department of Labor and Industries to continue its longstanding relationship with the Department of Energy regarding employees at the Hanford Nuclear Reservation.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: Mike Watson, Department of Labor and Industries; Bob Dilger, Construction Trades Council; Dan Sexton, Plumbers and Pipefitters.