

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6170

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Agriculture & Environment, February 3, 1998

Title: An act relating to the reclamation, closure, or decommissioning of a uranium or thorium mill or tailings facility.

Brief Description: Regarding reclamation, closure, or decommissioning of a uranium or thorium mill or tailings facility.

Sponsors: Senators Morton and Brown.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Agriculture & Environment: 1/28/98, 2/3/98 [DPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & ENVIRONMENT

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6170 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Morton, Chair; Swecker, Vice Chair; Fraser, McAuliffe, Oke and Rasmussen.

Staff: Vic Moon (786-7469)

Background: There is a uranium mine on the Spokane Indian reservation and tailing impoundment adjacent to the mine in Stevens County. The site of the uranium milling operation is being reclaimed and the reclamation of the rest of the site is in progress. The authority to direct reclamation of uranium and thorium mills is under the Department of Health.

Summary of Substitute Bill: The Department of Health may not approve the license or re-licensure for the reclamation, closure or decommissioning a uranium or thorium mill or tailing facility if the reclamation uses radioactive materials not produced at the site.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The substitute addresses licensure only, not reclamation planning.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: The state should not be the dumping grounds for low-level radioactive waste from other states.

Testimony Against: The only way the company will have money to reclaim the site and mine is to provide the service of taking waste from other areas. The legislative proposal will place the performance bond of the company in jeopardy.

Testified: PRO: Alfred Peone, Spokane Tribe; David Wynecoop, Spokane Tribe Council; Mary Moore, Spokane Tribe; Cherie Rodgers, Spokane City Council; Danielle Welliver, Lutheran Public Policy Office; Josh Baldi, WA Environmental Council; CON: Eric Slagle, Gary Robertson, DOH; Linda Hull, Chuck Blumenfeld, Dave Delcour, Dawn Mining.