

SENATE BILL REPORT

SJM 8016

As of January 16, 1998

Brief Description: Petitioning Congress to appropriate resources for full implementation of the Nonindigenous Aquatic Nuisance Prevention and Control Act of 1990.

Sponsors: Senators Jacobsen, Oke, Spanel and Kline.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Natural Resources & Parks: 1/22/98.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES & PARKS

Staff: Vic Moon (786-7469)

Background: Several nonindigenous aquatic species are found in waters of the United States and are causing specific environmental problems. Two of those are potentially a problem for Washington State in that the zebra mussel and the green crab from Europe are both getting nearer and nearer to Washington State. Zebra mussels have expanded their range in the last 12 months and have invaded a total of 90 lakes in the Great Lakes region of the United States. The United States has tracked the infestation of zebra mussels since 1988 when they were first detected in Lake St. Claire. Zebra mussels are native to eastern Europe and Asia and have few natural enemies in the United States. This is also true of the European green crab. Both species cause environmental problems. Zebra mussels are especially invasive. They clog intake pipes for water systems. They get into generators at power stations and have fouled engine cooling systems on recreational boats. The damage that these zebra mussels cause involves millions of dollars a year to both private industry and for governmental agencies.

The Army Corps of Engineers has reported new sightings of zebra mussel infestations on the Ohio River near Pittsburgh and on the Monongahela River in Pennsylvania.

Summary of Bill: The President and Congress are asked to appropriate resources necessary to implement the Federal Nonindigenous Aquatic Nuisance Prevention and Control Act of 1990. The act prohibits the discharge of ballast water that originated in a foreign port into a river, estuary or bay or the Pacific Ocean within the territorial limits of the United States and requires that ballast water that originated in a foreign port to be discharged at sea. The act authorizes matching funds to the states and Congress is asked to appropriate those matching funds to deal with nonindigenous invasive species.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 20, 1997.