
HOUSE BILL 2185

State of Washington 55th Legislature 1997 Regular Session

By Representatives Anderson, Morris, Kessler, Blalock and Costa

Read first time 02/25/97. Referred to Committee on Agriculture & Ecology.

1 AN ACT Relating to oil spills; and creating new sections.

2 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

3 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature finds that:

4 (a) Oil tankers delivering oil to refineries located at Ferndale
5 must transit either through Haro or Rosario Straits;

6 (b) Rosario Straits is particularly narrow and shallow, and as a
7 result has tides that are particularly strong and difficult to predict;

8 (c) Foreign tanker traffic to Puget Sound refineries may increase
9 by eight hundred percent as a result of Congress allowing Alaskan crude
10 oil to be exported to foreign countries;

11 (d) Foreign ships have had substantially higher mechanical failure
12 and accident rates than United States flagship tankers;

13 (e) Less than twenty percent of oil tankers traveling to Washington
14 ports have double hulls;

15 (f) Rosario Straits exits through the San Juan Islands and borders
16 rich shellfish areas of Bellingham, Samish, and Padilla Bays;

17 (g) These areas are some of the most beautiful and environmentally
18 sensitive in the world; and

1 (h) While special safety measures are already in effect to prevent
2 a catastrophic oil spill in Rosario Straits, these precautions have
3 never been evaluated using computer modeling to simulate emergency
4 conditions.

5 (2) The legislature therefore declares that it is in the public
6 interest for the office of marine safety or the department of ecology,
7 as appropriate, to conduct computer modeling of emergency conditions in
8 the Rosario Straits to evaluate existing safety precautions.

9 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1) The office of marine safety, or its
10 successor, shall develop a computer model to simulate emergency
11 conditions in the Rosario Straits for the purpose of evaluating the
12 ability of existing safety precautions to prevent a catastrophic oil
13 spill.

14 (2) The agency conducting the computer simulation under this
15 section shall report its findings to the appropriate standing
16 committees of the legislature by December 1, 1998.

17 (3) This act is null and void unless funding is specifically
18 provided by June 30, 1997, in the omnibus appropriations budget act for
19 the computer simulation required in subsection (1) of this section.

--- END ---