

HOUSE BILL ANALYSIS

HB 1050

Brief Description: Relieving the Department of Labor and Industries of the duties of coal mine inspection.

Sponsors: Conway and Clements

Hearing: January 27, 1999

BACKGROUND:

The state coal mining code was first enacted before the turn of the century. As a result, it primarily addressed the underground mining of coal. In 1997, the Legislature repealed the statute that regulated coal mining. The statute was repealed because no underground coal mines operated in Washington and because the federal government had taken over the regulation of coal mining operations. Currently, the Department of Labor and Industries does not regulate or inspect coal mines.

SUMMARY OF BILL:

Two sections of law concerning coal mine inspections are repealed. These sections were missed in 1997 when the Legislature repealed the mining statute.

The repealed sections require the Department of Labor and Industries to inspect coal mines for compliance with the mining codes, investigate any explosions or loss of life at a mine, authorize courts to order recalcitrant owners to permit inspections of a mine, and create a process for gaining and enforcing orders for corrective action issued by courts.

RULES AUTHORITY: The bill does not contain provisions addressing the rule making powers of an agency.

FISCAL NOTE: Not requested.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Ninety days after adjournment of a session in which bill is passed.