

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5067

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As Reported By Senate Committee On:  
Environmental Quality & Water Resources, March 2, 1999

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

**Brief Description:** Regulating reclamation and closure of uranium and thorium mills.

**Sponsors:** Senators Morton and Brown.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Environmental Quality & Water Resources: 1/19/99, 3/2/99 [DPS-WM].

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY & WATER RESOURCES

**Majority Report:** That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5067 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators Fraser, Chair; Eide, Vice Chair; Honeyford, Jacobsen, McAuliffe, Morton and Swecker.

**Staff:** Richard Rodger (786-7461)

**Background:** The site of the uranium milling operation next to the Spokane Indian Reservation in Stevens County is being reclaimed. The authority to direct reclamation of uranium and thorium mills lies with the Department of Health.

In 1995 the state approved a closure plan for the mill and authorized the importation of low-level radioactive waste to use as fill material on the site. The state permit is due to expire at the end of January 1999.

**Summary of Substitute Bill:** The Washington State Institute for Public Policy shall conduct a study of administrative procedures used by the Department of Health in its approval of the closure and reclamation plan for a uranium mill site located in Stevens County. The goals of the study are to recommend improvements to the agency's procedures, and ensure that when the state or federal government reviews the closure and reclamation of any uranium mines that public funds are not placed at risk due to inadequate licensing and bonding procedures.

**Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:** The provision that prohibited DOH from approving the license or relicensure of a uranium mill site if the facility uses radioactive waste not produced at the site is eliminated.

A study of the process used by DOH in approving the closure and reclamation of the Dawn Mining mill site to improve the process when the state or federal government considers closure and reclamation plans for uranium mine sites is required.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

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

**Testimony For:** None.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Testified:** No one.