SENATE BILL REPORT

ESSB 5082

As Passed Senate, March 17, 1999

Title: An act relating to microbial inactivation of biomedical waste.

Brief Description: Requiring microbial inactivation of biomedical waste.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Environmental Quality & Water Resources (originally sponsored by Senators Swecker and Rasmussen).

Brief History:
Committee Activity: Environmental Quality & Water Resources: 2/16/99, 3/2/99 [DPS]. Passed Senate, 3/17/99, 47-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY & WATER RESOURCES

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5082 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

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

Staff: Richard Ramsey (786-7412)

Background: Current law defines cultures and stocks as laboratory wastes infectious to humans. These wastes may contain high concentrations of pathogenic organisms, some of which are highly contagious and dangerous. The State and Territorial Association on Alternative Treatment Technologies has recommended a treatment standard to kill infectious agents.

Summary of Bill: Effective January 1, 2001, generators of cultures and stocks are required to either treat on-site or to segregate cultures and stocks from other biomedical waste and transport to a treatment facility. Neither generators of cultures and stocks nor biomedical waste treatment facilities may subject cultures to a process that generates or releases airborne pathogens from the waste before treatment.

"Cultures and stocks" are defined as wastes infectious to humans requiring biosafety levels 3 or 4 practices. Definitions of biosafety levels 3 and 4 practices are referenced to a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention publication.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: None.

Testimony Against: Large institutions with many labs should be viewed as a single facility and should use a central autoclave. Reliance upon waste haulers with safeguards is appropriate. Delete definition of "microbial inactivation" and rely upon "treatment." The surcharge on medical test site license fees is not necessary. Smaller companies and grant-funded research labs don't have resources to acquire autoclaves. US DOT regulations make this bill unnecessary.

Testified: Jackie Der and Karen Van Dusen, University of Washington (concerns); Dorothy Caravan, LASSA and Dynacare Laboratories (con); Jim Peterson, Smith Kline Beecham Clinical Laboratories (con); Robin Olson, NW Hospital (con); Robb Menaul, WA State Hospital Assn. (con; amendments); Enid Layes, WA Biotechnology & Biomedical Assn (concerns); Mike Ryherd and Stephen Benedict, Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, (con); Greg Hanon, WA State Veterinary Medical Association (concerns); Scott Nelson and Mark Leary, Browning-Ferris Industries (con).