

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5691

As of February 15, 1999

Title: An act relating to the regulation of geologists.

Brief Description: Providing for the licensing of geologists.

Sponsors: Senator Jacobsen.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Commerce, Trade, Housing & Financial Institutions: 2/16/99.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, TRADE, HOUSING & FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

Staff: David Pringle (786-7448)

Background: Geologists lend expertise to engineering projects, ground water inspections, land use planning, mineral exploration and development, and geologic and seismic hazards determinations. Many states regulate geologists. Oregon, for example, requires that anyone professionally preparing geologic maps, plans, or reports be registered by the State Board of Geologist Examiners.

Washington does not regulate professional geologists. Counties and cities may rely on registered civil engineers with a specialty in geotechnical engineering for evaluation of some geological projects.

Summary of Bill: The State Geologist Licensing Board is created. Geologists must be licensed by the board to practice within the state.

The board must develop standards and qualifications to ensure the professional practice of geology. The board must also conduct disciplinary hearings and practice reviews.

The director of the Department of Licencing must develop rules, fees, licensing examinations, and sanctions to regulate the practice of geology.

Educational, ethical, and work experience requirements for licensed geologists are specified.

The geologist's account is created. Fees for application, examination, and licensing are paid into this account. Expenditures from this account may be authorized by the director for the operation and enforcement of this chapter.

It is a gross misdemeanor for anyone to practice geology without a license, falsely claim that they are currently licensed, or submit any false evidence that they are authorized to obtain a license.

Distinctions are made between those activities regulated as the practice of geology and those that are not, including teaching, research, and the practice of engineering.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 12, 1999.

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