

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## HJM 4015

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As of February 19, 2002

**Brief Description:** Requesting full funding for the cleanup of the Hanford Reservation.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Delvin, Hankins, Ogden, Fisher, Lisk and G. Chandler.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Environment, Energy & Water: 2/21/02.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT, ENERGY & WATER

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

**Background:** The primary mission of the Hanford Reservation throughout its history was the production of plutonium. Reactor operations generated several waste streams including solid waste that was disposed of in burial grounds, low level liquid waste that was disposed of in the soil, and reactor cooling water, another form of low level liquid waste.

Currently, 54 million gallons of radioactive waste is stored on site in 177 underground single and double-walled tanks. The waste includes highly radioactive sludge and less radioactive liquids. The waste still contaminates and poses a substantial risk to the environment at the site.

In 1989, a Tri-Party Agreement regarding the cleanup of the Hanford site was signed by the State of Washington, the United States Environmental Protection Agency, and the United States Department of Energy. The agreement provides a schedule with milestones to clean up Hanford over a 30-year period.

The Tri-Party Agreement defines and ranks cleanup commitments under the Comprehensive Environmental Response Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA), establishes responsibilities, provides a basis for budgeting, and reflects a concerted goal of achieving full regulatory compliance and remediation. The Tri-Party Agreement consists of the actual legal agreement and the "action plan" to implement the cleanup.

The Department of Energy has two field offices at Hanford. The Richland Operations Office is responsible for site cleanup and science and technology. The Office of River Protection is responsible for tank waste treatment. The President's proposed budget, for fiscal year 2003, funds both of these offices at levels below the amount necessary to meet the obligations of the Tri-Party Agreement.

**Summary of Bill:** The President, Congress, and the Secretary of the United States Department of Energy are requested to fully fund the needs of a sustained environmental cleanup at the Hanford Reservation. Full funding is requested to meet the requirements of federal and state laws, the Tri-Party Agreement, and to provide environmental protection for the Columbia River and the citizens of the state of Washington.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.