
**Technology, Telecommunications
& Energy Committee**

HB 1243

Brief Description: Establishing a biodiesel pilot project for school transportation.

Sponsors: Representatives Sullivan, Wood, Crouse, Morris and Schoesler.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Establishes a pilot project for two school districts testing the use of biodiesel along with ultra-low sulfur diesel fuel in school buses for the 2003 and 2004 school years.

Hearing Date: 1/29/03

Staff: Pam Madson (786-7166).

Background:

Biodiesel is a non-petroleum diesel fuel produced from renewable sources such as vegetable oils, animal fats, and recycled cooking oils. It can be blended at any percentage with petroleum diesel or used as a pure product (neat diesel). Other states have adopted policies and incentives to encourage the use of biodiesel.

Biodiesel is registered as a fuel and fuel additive with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and has completed health effects testing requirements of the Clean Air Act. The American Society of Testing and Materials (ASTM) has issued a standard for all biodiesel bought and sold in the United States (Specification D 6751). Blended biodiesel is in use in Washington state to fuel some passenger cars and municipal vehicles.

Ultra-low sulfur diesel fuel is a specially refined diesel fuel that has lower sulfur content than regular on-highway diesel. The sulfur content ranges from 15 to 30 parts per million. Regular diesel has a maximum of 500 parts per million of sulfur.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is requiring that all on-highway diesel fuel must meet the ultra-low sulfur diesel standards in 2006.

Summary of Bill:

For the school year beginning September 2004, the Superintendent of Public Instruction must conduct a pilot project using biodiesel along with ultra low sulfur diesel (ULSD) in diesel engine school buses.

The pilot project must include two school districts. Priority is given to districts located in geographic areas identified by the Environmental Protection Agency as areas of concern for pollution emissions.

Conditions of the pilot project for the selected districts include the following:

- ULSD must be used in 25 percent of the school bus fleet for the district or at least 10 buses during the 2003 school year;
- Emissions must be tested prior to the use of ULSD and again six months after commencing use;
- ULSD must be used with 20 percent biodiesel during the 2004 school year in 75 percent, or at least seven, of the school buses that used ULSD in the 2003 school year;
- Emissions must be tested after six months of using the biodiesel additive; and
- Maintenance issues must be recorded.

The Superintendent of Public Instruction must report findings from the pilot project to the Legislature by September 1, 2005.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not Requested.

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