

FINAL BILL REPORT

ESHB 2488

C 194 L 04

Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Developing an electronic product management program.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Fisheries, Ecology & Parks (originally sponsored by Representatives Cooper, Campbell, Hunt, Romero, O'Brien, Chase, Sullivan, Ruderman, Dunshee, Wood and Dickerson).

House Committee on Fisheries, Ecology & Parks

House Committee on Appropriations

Senate Committee on Natural Resources, Energy & Water

Background:

Rapidly changing technological advances in the computer and electronics sector have resulted in an increasing number of outdated electronic products. The Environmental Protection Agency estimates that over 20 million personal computers became obsolete in 1998 and only 13 percent were reused or recycled. By 2005, more than 63 million personal computers are projected to be retired according to a recent study by the National Safety Council. Electronic products may contain hazardous materials including lead, mercury, brominated flame retardants, and hexavalent chromium. Cathode ray tubes in computer monitors and video display devices may contain between four to eight pounds of lead.

National and state efforts have been initiated to examine opportunities to recycle and reuse electronic waste and encourage development of products using less toxic substances and more recycled content. Representatives from electronics manufacturers, government agencies, environmental groups and others began meeting in April 2001 to develop a joint plan in the United States for managing used electronic products. The National Electronics Product Stewardship Initiative (NEPSI) goal is to develop a system to maximize collection, reuse and recycling of used electronics, while considering appropriate incentives to design products that facilitate source reduction and reuse and recycling and that reduce toxicity and increase recycled content.

The Department of Ecology (Department) is the state agency assigned the responsibility of managing the state's solid and hazardous wastes. The Department issued a policy notice for managing computer monitors, televisions, and other devices that contain cathode ray tubes (CRTs). Under these regulations, materials designated as hazardous, such as CRTs, must be handled, treated, and recycled differently than universal waste.

The Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC) consists of at least 11 members that provide consultation to the Department regarding solid and dangerous waste handling, recycling, and resource recovery.

The Environmental Protection Agency administers federal hazardous waste regulations, and exporters of hazardous waste must comply with certain documentation and labeling requirements.

Summary:

The Department, in consultation with the SWAC, must research information regarding the collection, recycling, and reuse of electronic products. Covered electronic products include all computer monitors, personal computers, and televisions sold to consumers for personal use. The Department must identify and evaluate existing projects and encourage new pilot projects to allow evaluation of a variety of factors including urban versus rural programs, a diversity of financing types, and the impact of approaches on local governments and other stakeholders.

The Department must work with the Environmental Protection Agency and other stakeholders to determine the amount of electronic waste exported from Washington that is subject to federal reporting requirements.

The Department must also review data on health and environmental impacts from electronic waste, review existing programs and infrastructure for electronic product reuse and recycling, compile information regarding manufacturers' electronic product collection and recycling programs, and report findings and recommendations to the Legislature by December 15, 2004, and December 15, 2005.

These programs expire December 31, 2005. The recommendations must include a description of what could be accomplished voluntarily, and what legislation may be needed to implement a statewide collection, recycling and reuse plan for electronic products.

Votes on Final Passage:

House	94	0	
Senate	48	0	(Senate amended)
House	97	0	(House concurred)

Effective: June 10, 2004