

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## ESHB 1243

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As Reported By Senate Committee On:  
Natural Resources, Energy & Water, March 21, 2003

**Title:** An act relating to a biodiesel pilot project.

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

**Sponsors:** House Committee on Technology, Telecommunications & Energy (originally sponsored by Representatives Sullivan, Wood, Crouse, Morris and Schoesler).

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Natural Resources, Energy & Water: 3/21/03 [DP].

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES, ENERGY & WATER

**Majority Report:** Do pass.

Signed by Senators Morton, Chair; Hewitt, Vice Chair; Doumit, Fraser, Hargrove and Regala.

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

**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. Other states have adopted policies and incentives to encourage the use of biodiesel. Blended biodiesel is currently used in Washington to fuel some passenger cars and municipal vehicles.

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).

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 beginning in 2006.

**Summary of Bill:** For the school year beginning September 2003, 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 in at least 10 buses for at least one of the pilot districts 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 and one participating district may use a blend of 20 percent biodiesel for the entire pilot period;
- 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.

Funding for the pilot project may not use state general fund moneys.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed. The bill expires on September 1, 2005.

**Testimony For:** This bill is part of a package of bills that is designed in a comprehensive fashion to help farmers, improve air quality, and create jobs. Diesel fuel is a significant contributor to air pollution, and recent studies indicate that diesel fumes pose a risk to children who ride school buses. Washington State ranks second in the nation for the oldest school bus fleet. Reducing the air pollutants from vehicular fuel emissions will help reduce health conditions that are exacerbated by air pollutants, particularly for children. Biodiesel, blended at a 20 percent ratio (B20), reduces harmful emissions by 20-30 percent. Pure biodiesel (B100) reduces emissions up to 80 percent. It appears that there will be federal grants available to support these demonstration projects.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Testified:** PRO: Linda Graham, Puget Sound Clean Cities Coalition; Jim Armstrong, Spokane County Conservation District; Sam Bryant, Sound Biodiesel, Inc.; Rupert Wild; Graeme Sackrison; Sue Minahan, League of Women Voters; Ezra Eickmeyer.