

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5200

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As of January 17, 2003

**Title:** An act relating to height restrictions on amateur radio antennas.

**Brief Description:** Establishing criteria for amateur radio antenna heights.

**Sponsors:** Senators Roach, Benton, Swecker, Finkbeiner, Stevens and Sheahan.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Government Operations & Elections: 1/17/03.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & ELECTIONS

**Staff:** Diane Smith (786-7410)

**Background:** Amateur radio (ham) communications are conducted on certain frequencies and in specified manners determined by the Federal Communication Commission. The physics of radio transmission and reception are such that ham antennas must be configured and sited in particular ways in order to be effective.

In the state emergency management plan, ham radio operators, through their association, the Amateur Radio Relay League, are the communication providers of last resort, when governmental and commercial telecommunications are overloaded or otherwise inoperable.

**Summary of Bill:** Local governments may not restrict the height of ham radio antennas to less than 70 feet without determining that the benefits resulting from the height restriction outweigh the cost to the amateur radio emergency network's ability to provide back-up emergency communications throughout the entire state.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

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