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SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL 8013

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State of Washington                      58th Legislature                      2003 Regular Session

By Senators Fairley, Winsley, Fraser, Jacobsen, Kohl-Welles and Kline

Read first time 02/04/2003.            Referred to Committee on Natural Resources, Energy & Water.

1            TO THE HONORABLE GEORGE W. BUSH, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,  
2            AND TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE AND THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF  
3            REPRESENTATIVES, AND TO THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE  
4            UNITED STATES, IN CONGRESS ASSEMBLED, AND TO THE ADMINISTRATOR OF THE  
5            UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY:

6            We, your Memorialists, the Senate and House of Representatives of  
7            the State of Washington, in legislative session assembled, respectfully  
8            represent and petition as follows:

9            WHEREAS, Toxic waste sites threaten public and environmental  
10           health; and

11           WHEREAS, The threats to public health posed by toxic waste sites  
12           include cancer and other diseases caused by PCBs, benzene, cadmium,  
13           TCE, and arsenic, and central nervous system damage caused by lead; and

14           WHEREAS, One in four people in the United States live within four  
15           miles of a Superfund site; and

16           WHEREAS, Thirty-six of forty-eight Superfund sites in the state of  
17           Washington involve ground water contamination and sixty-one percent of  
18           people in Washington rely on ground water for drinking water; and

19           WHEREAS, Superfund is the nation's preeminent law for cleaning up  
20           the most contaminated toxic waste sites; and

1       WHEREAS, The success of Superfund depends upon taxes that make  
2 polluting industries and users of dangerous products pay to clean up  
3 contamination, when polluters refuse to undertake clean-up, or cannot  
4 be found, or cannot afford to pay; and

5       WHEREAS, Since the creation of Superfund, every previous  
6 administration has collected and supported reauthorization of Superfund  
7 taxes on polluting industries and users of dangerous products; and

8       WHEREAS, These taxes expired in 1995 and the three billion dollars  
9 in remaining funds have now diminished to less than thirty million  
10 dollars; and

11       WHEREAS, The amount that citizens now contribute to cover the cost  
12 of clean-ups has increased, but funding of clean-ups has decreased, and  
13 taxes on polluting industries and users of dangerous products have not  
14 been reauthorized; and

15       WHEREAS, The rate of clean-up of toxic waste sites has decreased by  
16 more than fifty percent in two years; and

17       WHEREAS, In the state of Washington, the federal Environmental  
18 Protection Agency has told a community that the agency cannot conduct  
19 a human health risk assessment at a site that is contaminated with  
20 heavy metals and radioactive material; and

21       WHEREAS, The longer that toxic waste sites remain polluted, the  
22 greater the threat to the health of neighboring communities;

23       NOW, THEREFORE, Your Memorialists respectfully pray that Superfund  
24 taxes on polluting industries and users of dangerous products be  
25 reauthorized, in order to clean-up the most heavily contaminated toxic  
26 waste sites to protect public and environmental health, and that the  
27 amount of funding that is contributed by citizens be reduced.

28       BE IT RESOLVED, That copies of this Memorial be immediately  
29 transmitted to the Honorable George W. Bush, President of the United  
30 States, the Administrator of the United States Environmental Protection  
31 Agency, the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the  
32 House of Representatives, and each member of Congress from the State of  
33 Washington.

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