

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5883

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As Reported By Senate Committee On:  
Natural Resources, Ocean & Recreation, February 28, 2005

**Title:** An act relating to the University of Washington forest systems and bioenergy program.

**Brief Description:** Funding the University of Washington forest systems and bioenergy program.

**Sponsors:** Senators Jacobsen and Kohl-Welles.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Natural Resources, Ocean & Recreation: 2/24/05, 2/28/05 [DPS].

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES, OCEAN & RECREATION

**Majority Report:** That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5883 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Jacobsen, Chair; Doumit, Vice Chair; Oke, Ranking Minority Member; Hargrove, Morton, Spanel and Swecker.

**Staff:** Vic Moon (786-7469)

**Background:** The legislature has given tax incentives to encourage research and development of alternative fuel sources. One area of research is the development of biofuel made from wood waste. Wood waste and unusable small diameter wood can be converted into fuel using simple methods. Doing this as well as developing an in-forest system will be important factors in future forest management.

**Summary of Substitute Bill:** Forests throughout the American west are suffering from the accumulation of small-diameter wood materials to levels well in excess of what would be found in natural forest ecosystems.

In partnership with government scientists, rural community planners, and private industry, the legislature recognizes that the University of Washington forest systems and bioenergy program is developing technology tools that use the abundant small-diameter wood materials as a cost-effective source of bioenergy for hydrogen fuel cells, biofuels for cars and engines, and other chemical applications. Research priorities include:

- 1) maximizing the conversion efficiency of wood to methanol;
- 2) analyzing the economic, environmental, and social impacts of establishing conversion systems at a variety of locations; and
- 3) establishing best practices to ensure a sustainable harvest of forest materials.

**Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:** A forty thousand dollar appropriation from the general fund is made. The rest of the bill is the same.

**Appropriation:** \$40,000 from the general fund.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Committee/Commission/Task Force Created:** No.

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

**Testimony For:** A bioenergy project could have huge economic benefits to the state and could have significant impacts on rural areas A project is being considered for Ferry County. The biofuel program would have major positive environmental impacts and would help solve the national forest health problem.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Who Testified:** PRO: Michael Andreu and Kristina Vogt, University of Washington.