

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6515

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Water, Energy & Environment, January 25, 2006

Title: An act relating to consumer and producer information on the use of biofuels and renewable energy production.

Brief Description: Providing information on biofuels and renewable energy.

Sponsors: Senators Fraser, Oke, Morton, Poulsen, Mulliken, Pridemore, Rockefeller, Regala, McAuliffe, Rasmussen, Kline and Keiser.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Water, Energy & Environment: 1/25/06 [DP-WM].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WATER, ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT

Majority Report: Do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators Poulsen, Chair; Rockefeller, Vice Chair; Morton, Ranking Minority Member; Delvin, Fraser, Honeyford, Mulliken and Pridemore.

Staff: Sam Thompson (786-7413)

Background: The Washington State University (WSU) Extension Energy Program works with government agencies, power marketers, utility consortiums, and private businesses and industries on projects that promote energy conservation and development of renewable energy sources.

Summary of Bill: From specifically appropriated funds, a biofuels consumer education and outreach program will be established at the WSU Extension Energy Program. The program will provide information regarding use of biofuels in transportation, heating, electricity generation and other applications. Services will be primarily implemented through competitive grants to public agencies, nonprofit organizations, and businesses.

The program and grant recipients will provide information regarding: biofuel availability; in-state facilities; types, grades, blends, and their potential uses; use in vehicles and equipment and modifications to improve operation; the role of the agricultural and forest products industry and benefits to local communities; and energy security, air quality, and associated benefits.

The program will also provide technical assistance to increase use of biofuels in vehicle fleets, information concerning tax incentives, sources of technical assistance for installing production facilities and meeting regulatory requirements, and information regarding utility acquisition of renewable energy.

The program will consult with the Departments of Agriculture, Ecology, and Community, Trade, and Economic Development to maximize effectiveness.

Program design and implementation will begin in fiscal year 2007. The grant program and other elements will be fully implemented fiscal year 2008.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Testimony For: Information provided under this program will promote use of biofuels and growth of the biofuel industry in Washington. Federal outreach funding, which has enabled the Energy Program to assist several projects throughout the state, ends soon. Research is, by itself, insufficient to promote use of biofuels--interested parties must be supplied with pertinent information.

Testimony Against: None.

Who Testified: PRO: Jack Fey, WSU Energy Program.