
**Rural Development, Agriculture, &
Natural Resources Committee**

SJM 8005

Brief Description: Supporting the continued research, development, production, and application of biochar from our forests and agricultural lands.

Sponsors: Senators Short, Van De Wege, Warnick, Palumbo, Brown, McCoy, Braun, Liias, Schoesler, Hunt, Wilson, C., Wilson, L., Rolfes, Das and Rivers.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Affirms the Legislature's support for biochar research, including research into the production of biochar and research into applications for biochar.

Hearing Date: 3/15/19

Staff: Robert Hatfield (786-7117).

Background:

Biochar is a fine-grained charcoal left behind after pyrolysis of crop residues, livestock manures, or other organic materials. Pyrolysis is the high-temperature processing of organic materials in the absence of oxygen.

Biochar is used in multiple applications, including as a soil amendment and in sewage and wastewater treatment. Researchers have found that biochar applied to wet soils can decrease the production of methane and nitrous oxide. Other research has shown that biochar can be useful for restoring degraded soils because of its ability to bind to heavy metals.

Summary of Bill:

The Senate Joint Memorial affirms the Legislature's support for the biochar research efforts of the United States Forest Service, the Agricultural Research Service of the United States

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Department of Agriculture, Washington State University, the Department of Ecology, and other institutions. These research efforts include research to produce biochar from the removal of wildfire fuel loads, from waste agricultural products, and from other waste biomass destined for landfills or combustion.

The Senate Joint Memorial also affirms the Legislature's support for the research of biochar as an animal feed, remediation tool, landscaping material, and soil amendment for forest and agricultural lands.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.