
SENATE BILL 5145

State of Washington

66th Legislature

2019 Regular Session

By Senators Salomon, Nguyen, Dhingra, Rolfes, Frockt, Hunt, Billig, Darneille, Palumbo, Kuderer, Saldaña, and Van De Wege

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1 AN ACT Relating to the use of hydraulic fracturing in the
2 exploration for and production of oil and natural gas; adding a new
3 section to chapter 78.52 RCW; and creating a new section.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that hydraulic
6 fracturing of underground formations for the removal of oil and gas
7 deposits is a relatively new technology whose long-term impacts upon
8 human health and environmental quality are largely unknown. This
9 technology requires large quantities of fracking fluids containing
10 chemicals that are exempt from public disclosure and which may
11 contaminate groundwater and surface waters used as drinking water
12 supplies. Each well in which hydraulic fracturing is employed
13 requires more than one million gallons of water per year, with the
14 average well using from three to eight million gallons of water over
15 its lifetime. In many areas of the state, the existing groundwater
16 supplies and surface water sources are fully appropriated, and such
17 large new demands would threaten existing uses for agriculture,
18 industrial, and municipal purposes.

19 The legislature further finds that as much as ninety percent of
20 the fracking fluids must be disposed of following use in the fracking
21 well, with most of this fluid subsequently returned following limited

1 treatment back into underground injection wells. Very little is known
2 at this time regarding the impact that these disposed fluids may have
3 upon groundwater aquifers and the potential adverse human health
4 impacts from such exposure.

5 Other adverse environmental impacts have also been identified in
6 hydraulic fracturing. Large quantities of methane are released in
7 this process, which is both a toxic pollutant as well as a very
8 potent greenhouse gas. Hydraulic fracturing is also suspected to be
9 the source of increased seismicity in some regions with numerous
10 wells.

11 For these reasons, the legislature intends to prohibit the use of
12 hydraulic fracturing. In the future, the legislature may direct that
13 sufficient regulatory standards be in place prior to the repeal of
14 the prohibition on hydraulic fracturing.

15 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 78.52
16 RCW to read as follows:

17 (1) The use of hydraulic fracturing in the exploration for, and
18 production of, oil and natural gas is prohibited.

19 (2) For the purposes of this section, "hydraulic fracturing"
20 means the process of pumping a fluid into or under the surface of the
21 ground in order to create fractures in rock for the purpose of the
22 production or recovery of oil or natural gas.

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