

FINAL BILL REPORT

SB 5884

C 342 L 24
Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Concerning court-ordered restitution in environmental criminal cases.

Sponsors: Senators Trudeau, Pedersen, Dhingra, Hasegawa, Lovelett, Nobles, Saldaña, Salomon, Stanford and Valdez.

Senate Committee on Environment, Energy & Technology
House Committee on Environment & Energy

Background: Environmental Criminal Statutes. Washington law criminalizes certain conduct which is known to cause harm to the environment. Separate statutes across different chapters impose criminal penalties for violations relating to water pollution, air pollution, and hazardous waste management. These statutes expressly authorize penalties such as fines or imprisonment. There is no language within these statutes expressly authorizing court-ordered restitution for harm suffered by victims of environmental crime.

Restitution. Restitution is a specific sum of money ordered by the sentencing court to be paid by the offender to the court over a specified period of time as payment of damages. Restitution may be used to compensate victims or cover certain public costs for monetary harm arising out of a criminal offense. Statutes governing the application of restitution for violation of criminal law can be found in separate titles of the Revised Code of Washington.

Summary: The courts are authorized to order restitution for harm to natural resources or the environment, following a criminal conviction related to water pollution, air pollution, and hazardous waste management.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	31	18
House	58	36

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Effective: June 6, 2024