

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## SHB 1984

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### As Passed House:

March 4, 2009

**Title:** An act relating to motor vehicle air conditioning equipment.

**Brief Description:** Authorizing the use of a safe alternative refrigerant in motor vehicle air conditioning equipment.

**Sponsors:** House Committee on Ecology & Parks (originally sponsored by Representatives Finn, Armstrong, Upthegrove and Wood).

### Brief History:

#### Committee Activity:

Ecology & Parks: 2/17/09, 2/20/09 [DPS].

#### Floor Activity

Passed House: 3/4/09, 94-1.

### Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Allows the use of an alternative refrigerant in motor vehicle air-conditioning equipment if the refrigerant is included in the list of safe alternative motor vehicle air-conditioning substitutes for chlorofluorocarbon-12 published by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, as it exists on the effective date of this bill.

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## HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ECOLOGY & PARKS

**Majority Report:** The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Upthegrove, Chair; Rolfes, Vice Chair; Chase, Dickerson, Dunshee, Eddy, Finn, Hudgins and Morris.

**Minority Report:** Do not pass. Signed by 3 members: Representatives Short, Ranking Minority Member; Orcutt and Shea.

**Staff:** Anna Jackson (786-7190)

### Background:

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

### Air-Conditioning Equipment.

"Air-conditioning equipment" is defined in statute as mechanical vapor compression refrigeration equipment that is used to cool the driver or passenger compartment of any motor vehicle. Currently, it is illegal for air-conditioning equipment to contain any refrigerant that is toxic or flammable.

### Federal Significant New Alternatives Policy.

The federal Clean Air Act provides for the review of alternatives to ozone-depleting substances and the approval of substitutes that do not present a more significant risk than other available alternatives. Similarly, federal law requires that, to the maximum extent practicable, certain substances must be replaced by chemicals, product substitutes, or alternative manufacturing processes that reduce overall risks to human health and the environment. This policy is known as the Significant New Alternatives Policy (SNAP). Under the SNAP, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is required to publish a list of prohibited substitutes for specific uses, as well as safe alternatives identified for specific uses. Pursuant to its authority under the SNAP, the EPA promulgated a rule in 2008 that permits the use of a substitute for motor vehicle air-conditioning substances that is a non ozone-depleting gas.

### **Summary of Substitute Bill:**

Alternative refrigerants may be used in motor vehicle air-conditioning equipment if the refrigerant is included in the list of safe alternative motor vehicle air-conditioning substitutes for chlorofluorocarbon-12 published by the EPA.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

### **Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) This bill would allow the use of certain new refrigerants in motor vehicle air-conditioning equipment that have almost no greenhouse gas emissions, which is a logical and environmentally-sound cause supported by the automobile manufacturers and the Department of Ecology.

(Opposed) None.

**Persons Testifying:** Representative Finn, prime sponsor; Sandi Swarthout, Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers; and Bob Saunders, Department of Ecology.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.