

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2515

As Reported by House Committee On:
Technology, Energy & Communications

Title: An act relating to biodiesel fuel labeling requirements.

Brief Description: Regarding biodiesel fuel labeling requirements.

Sponsors: Representatives Morris, Chase, Kenney and Hudgins.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Technology, Energy & Communications: 1/18/10, 1/21/10 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Changes the labeling requirement for biodiesel fuel.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TECHNOLOGY, ENERGY & COMMUNICATIONS

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 17 members: Representatives McCoy, Chair; Finn, Vice Chair; Crouse, Ranking Minority Member; Haler, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Carlyle, Condotta, Eddy, Hasegawa, Hinkle, Hudgins, Jacks, McCune, Morris, Nealey, Takko, Taylor and Van De Wege.

Staff: Kara Durbin (786-7133).

Background:

The quality of fuel in Washington is regulated by the Motor Fuel Quality Act (Act). Under the Act, the Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) is responsible for developing fuel quality standards and labeling requirements for biodiesel fuel and ethanol. All fuel pumps offering ethanol or biodiesel must contain a label indicating the percentage of biodiesel or ethanol in the fuel.

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.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

Fuel pumps in the state that offer a biodiesel blend of up to 5 percent must be identified with a label indicating that the fuel "may contain up to 5 percent biodiesel." Biodiesel blends above 5 percent must be identified with a label stating the percentage of biodiesel being offered.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The substitute bill clarifies that the "up to 5 percent" label only applies to biodiesel blends of up to 5 percent, and not to biodiesel blends over 5 percent.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) Current law requires that the exact percentage of biodiesel be specified on the label. But in reality, with lower blends, it is not an exact science. This will provide more flexibility to retailers and distributors in labeling while still giving customers good information. This would also make our labeling requirements consistent with Oregon's labeling standards. One technical amendment may be needed to clarify the labeling requirement for biodiesel blends above 5 percent.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Morris, Prime sponsor; Steve Gano, Shell Oil; and Kirk Robinson, Washington State Department of Agriculture.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.