
Environment Committee

SSB 6086

Brief Description: Reducing PCBs in products purchased by agencies.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Energy, Environment & Telecommunications (originally sponsored by Senators Billig, Ericksen, McCoy and Rolfes).

<p style="text-align: center;">Brief Summary of Substitute Bill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Requires the Department of Enterprise Services to establish purchasing and procurement policies that provide for a preference for products and products in packaging that do not contain polychlorinated biphenyls.
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Hearing Date: 2/19/14

Staff: Megan Mulvihill (786-7291) and Jason Callahan (786-7117).

Background:

Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) are synthetic organic chemicals that were manufactured from 1929 until 1979. Due to their chemical stability, low flammability, high boiling point, and electrical insulating properties, PCBs were used in a variety of commercial and industrial applications such as electrical insulating and transformers; hydraulic equipment; plasticizers in paints, plastics, and rubber products; and in pigments and dyes.

In 1979 the Toxic Substance Control Act (TSCA) was passed, requiring the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to control any substances, including PCBs, which were determined to cause unreasonable risk to the public health or the environment. According to the EPA, PCBs are known to cause cancer in animals along with other adverse health effects to the immune, reproductive, neurological, and endocrine systems.

The general ban on PCBs under TSCA and associated federal rules contain certain exemptions for products containing PCBs. In most cases, the products must have PCB concentrations of less than 50 parts per million. Examples include mining equipment, hydraulic systems, and heat

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transfer stations. In addition, some products are allowed to be manufactured regardless of PCB concentration such as carbon copy paper and natural gas pipeline systems.

The Department of Enterprise services (DES) is responsible for providing products and services to the government and residents. The DES sets the policies and procedures for state procurement including the development and administration of contracts for goods and services.

Summary of Bill:

The DES must establish purchasing and procurement policies that provide a preference for products and products in packaging that do not contain PCBs. Unless it is not technically feasible or cost effective, no state agency may knowingly purchase products or products in packaging containing PCBs above the practical quantification limit. Practical quantification limit means the lowest concentration that can be reliably measured within specified limits of precision, accuracy, representativeness, completeness, and comparability during routine laboratory operating conditions.

The DES is not required to test every product obtained, but may accept accredited laboratory or testing facility results documenting PCB levels in products or products' packaging from businesses, manufacturers, organizations, and individuals. In addition, DES may request suppliers to provide testing data documenting PCB levels.

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.