

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1189

As Passed Legislature

Title: An act relating to the moratorium on oil and gas exploration and production off the Washington coast.

Brief Description: Making the moratorium on oil and gas exploration and production off the Washington coast permanent.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Natural Resources (originally sponsored by Representatives K. Schmidt, Chandler, DeBolt, Zellinsky, Buck, McMorris, Mastin, Carlson, Radcliff, Talcott, D. Schmidt, Carrell, Cairnes, Ballasiotes, Huff, Robertson, Hickel, Mitchell, Wolfe, Chopp, Kessler, H. Sommers, Cody, Murray, Doumit, Gardner, Regala, Morris, Wensman, Butler, Hatfield, Fisher, Ogden, Wood, Keiser, Conway, Kenney, Anderson, O'Brien, Cooper, Romero, Poulsen, Mason and Blalock).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Natural Resources: 1/29/97, 1/31/97 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 2/19/97, 98-0.

Passed Legislature.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 11 members: Representatives Buck, Chairman; Sump, Vice Chairman; Thompson, Vice Chairman; Regala, Ranking Minority Member; Butler, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Alexander; Anderson; Chandler; Hatfield; Pennington and Sheldon.

Staff: Rick Anderson (786-7114).

Background: Legislation enacted in 1989 established a policy temporarily prohibiting the leasing of Washington's tidal or submerged lands for coastal oil and gas exploration, development, and production. In 1996, the Legislature extended the prohibition until July 1, 2000. The 1989 legislation also required a study identifying the positive and negative impacts of leasing state-owned lands for oil and gas development. The study was due in 1994, but was never initiated.

Summary of Bill: The prohibition on coastal oil and gas exploration, development, and production is made permanent. The statute requiring the 1994 study is repealed.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: There is a great deal of popular support for a permanent ban on oil and gas drilling. The recent oil spill along the coast of Japan is a reminder of the need to take all appropriate precautions to protect the state's coastline.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Representative Karen Schmidt, prime sponsor; Representative Lynn Kessler; Ed Owens, Coalition of Coastal Fisheries and others; Diane Ellison, Ellison Timber & Properties; and Bruce Wishart, People for Puget Sound (all in favor).