

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5606

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Agriculture & Environment, March 5, 1997

Title: An act relating to standards for location of certain solid waste landfills.

Brief Description: Establishing parameters for solid waste facility locational standards.

Sponsors: Senators Rasmussen and Swecker.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Agriculture & Environment: 2/18/97, 3/5/97 [DPS, DNP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & ENVIRONMENT

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5606 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Morton, Chair; Swecker, Vice Chair; Fraser and Rasmussen.

Minority Report: Do not pass.

Signed by Senators McAuliffe, Newhouse and Oke.

Staff: Kari Guy (786-7437)

Background: "Minimum functional standards" is the term used to describe the performance, design, maintenance and operating requirements for solid waste landfills. In 1993, the Department of Ecology issued its final rules addressing the minimum functional standards which apply to landfills. Additionally, local health departments may enact more stringent ordinances for any of the landfill facilities in their jurisdiction.

The current minimal functional standards for municipal solid waste landfills include an array of requirements, including location criteria, construction and liner requirements, operational standards, and ground and surface water monitoring requirements. Because one of these requirements is that the lowest liner must be more than 10 feet above the seasonal high level of ground water, landfills which are sited in wet areas must be built above grade.

Summary of Bill: Landfills with a design capacity in excess of 100 acres and an average height of 100 feet or more above grade may not be located over a federally-designated sole source aquifer.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: Other locational standards are deleted.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

Testimony For: The Department of Ecology standards are not broad enough to protect the citizens of Washington. The standards do not protect groundwater quality, and may create a hazard in areas where citizens rely on wells for drinking water.

Testimony Against: Landfill siting is a local issue. The standards adopted by the Department of Ecology are protective of public health and the environment. This bill will interfere with an ongoing local debate.

Testified: Judy Whitman, Viki Steiner, Susan Hanson, CROWD (pro); Norma Woodward, Ohop Grange (pro); Dan Silver, Department of Ecology (con); Bill Vogler, Washington Association of Counties (con); Pat Dunn, LRI (con); John Paul Jones, Washington Refuse and Recycling Association (con); George Walk, Pierce County.