

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HJM 4021

As Reported By House Committee On:
Agriculture & Ecology

Brief Description: Requesting Congress to enact certain legislation regarding commercial fertilizer.

Sponsors: Representatives Linville, G. Chandler, Dickerson, Kessler, Cody, Lovick, Lantz, Wood and Anderson.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Agriculture & Ecology: 2/2/00, 2/4/00 [DPS].

<p>Brief Summary of Substitute Bill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">· Requests congress to enact certain legislation regarding commercial fertilizers.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & ECOLOGY

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 14 members: Representatives G. Chandler, Republican Co-Chair; Linville, Democratic Co-Chair; Cooper, Democratic Vice Chair; Koster, Republican Vice Chair; Anderson; B. Chandler; Delvin; Fortunato; Grant; Reardon; Schoesler; Stensen; Sump and Wood.

Staff: Kenneth Hirst (786-7105).

Background:

In 1998 state legislation was enacted that adopted the Canadian standards for the non-nutrient content of commercial fertilizers and authorized the state's Department of Agriculture to revise these standards if federal standards are adopted or if peer-reviewed scientific studies found that the standards are not appropriate for protecting human health or the environment. The legislation also regulated micro-nutrient fertilizers and the use of waste materials in the production of commercial fertilizers, established means for those who use commercial fertilizers to obtain information

regarding the components of the fertilizers, and directed that certain additional technical studies be conducted regarding such materials.

In 1999 legislation was enacted altering provisions of the 1998 legislation. Certain labeling requirements were modified as were requirements on how information on the content of fertilizers is to be provided. In addition, the legislation no longer permitted component registration of fertilizers, and waived metals information requirements for certain ammonia products.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

Congress is requested to enact legislation that: 1) requires packaged commercial fertilizer to be labeled to make information regarding the non-nutrient content of the fertilizer, including any heavy metals, available to purchasers; 2) requires such information to be available to purchasers of bulk fertilizer; and 3) establishes national standards for the non-nutrient content of commercial fertilizers.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: Rather than requesting legislation that would require packaged fertilizers to be labeled to show the nutritive, micro-nutritive, and non-nutritive content, the substitute memorial requests that they be labeled to make information regarding the non-nutrient content available to purchasers. Rather than requesting Congress to authorize each state to establish standards for the contents of the fertilizers, the substitute memorial requests national standards for the non-nutrient content of the fertilizers.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Testimony For: National standards should be set to remove the interstate commerce problems encountered when states attempt to set their own. Risk analyses are currently being conducted to determine what the uniform national action should be. This state's fertilizer companies have met the challenge posed by being the most highly regulated in the nation.

Testimony Against: Testimony Against: None.

Testified: (In support) Mary Beth Lang and Ted Maxwell, Department of Agriculture; and Dan Coyne, Far West Fertilizer and Chemical Association.

(Commented): Deb Seymour, Washington Toxics Coalition.