

## Local Government Committee

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### BILL ANALYSIS SSB 5059

**TITLE OF THE BILL:** An act relating to the transportation impacts of uranium mill tailings or waste.

**WHAT THIS BILL DOES:** *Allows counties to assess impact fees to cover the costs associated with the transportation of uranium mill tailings over their roadways.*

**SPONSORS:** Senate State and Local Government Committee (originally sponsored by Senators Brown and Morton).

**HEARING DATE:** Thursday, April 1, 1999

**FISCAL NOTE:** Not requested.

**ANALYSIS PREPARED BY:** Scott MacColl (786-7106)

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### BACKGROUND:

Potential hazards are created from the milling of uranium and thorium because they exude potentially hazardous radioactive gas and particles into the atmosphere from the tailings area. Prior to the termination of any radioactive materials license, all milling facilities and associated tailings piles must be decommissioned in a manner that brings the potential public health hazard to a minimum.

The Department of Health has authority to direct reclamation of uranium and thorium mills. The state approved a closure plan in 1995 for a uranium milling operation next to the Spokane Indian Reservation in Stevens County, which expired in January of 1999. The plan authorizes the importation of millions of cubic feet of low level radioactive waste to use as fill material on the site.

## **SUMMARY:**

Counties are authorized to assess reasonable impact fees to plan for and respond to the movement of waste classified as 11e(2) waste under the Atomic Energy Act, when such waste is transported through the county.

The impact fees may be imposed by the affected counties on the entity or entities responsible for transporting the waste only after the county conducts a public hearing. The hearing must address the potential transportation and safety impacts, including the need to plan and prepare for possible degradation of county roads, and potential accidents and spills; and the extent to which the state plan for authorizing transportation addresses the impacts on the county.