

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## ESSB 6455

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As Passed Senate, February 14, 2000

**Title:** An act relating to the regulation of geologists.

**Brief Description:** Providing for the licensing of geologists.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Commerce, Trade, Housing & Financial Institutions (originally sponsored by Senators Gardner, Winsley, Fraser, Shin, Kohl-Welles, Brown, Costa, Fairley and Jacobsen).

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Commerce, Trade, Housing & Financial Institutions: 1/28/2000, 2/3/2000 [DPS].

Passed Senate, 2/14/2000, 36-12.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, TRADE, HOUSING & FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

**Majority Report:** That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6455 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Prentice, Chair; Shin, Vice Chair; Benton, Gardner, Hale, Heavey, Rasmussen, T. Sheldon and Winsley.

**Staff:** Elizabeth Mitchell (786-7430)

**Background:** Twenty-seven states currently require geologists to be licensed. There is concern that not licensing geologists may lead to a lack of standardization in the work these geologists provide.

**Summary of Bill:** It is unlawful for any person to practice or offer to practice geology in this state unless the person has been licensed, with limited exceptions.

A state Geologist Licensing Board is created. Requirements for becoming a licensed geologist are specified, and include educational requirements, four years of experience in geological work, and satisfactory completion of a licensing examination. An applicant who applies for licensing by July 1, 2001, is granted a license without written examination if the applicant meets specified criteria.

Acts which constitute grounds for suspension or revocation of a geologist license are specified. The director is authorized to investigate reports of unprofessional conduct, and may use the board to conduct hearings. Practicing or offering to practice geology without a license is considered a class one civil infraction.

A geologist's account is created in the custody of the State Treasurer. All fees and fines collected due pursuant to this act are deposited in this account.

In accordance with Initiative 695, the portion of the act pertaining to fees is referred to the people for their approval at the next general election.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

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

**Testimony For:** Licensing geologists would allow consumers and government officials to determine the validity of reports. People would be able to more easily identify someone knowledgeable about geology.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Testified:** PRO: Britt Nederhood; Jeff Cameron, Public Works Director, Kelso/Longview; Mike Ryherd; Joe Butler; Glen Strachan; Kenneth Neal, Association of Engineering Geologists.

**House Amendment(s):** A wording change is made to suggested ballot title language. The minimum required years of experience to become licensed in geology or a specialty of geology is increased from four to five years. Three years of this experience must be gained under the supervision of a licensed geologist or other person considered qualified by the State Geologist Licensing Board.