

FINAL BILL REPORT

SSJM 8017

As Passed Legislature

Brief Description: Requesting federal assistance in ensuring pipeline safety.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Environmental Quality & Water Resources (originally sponsored by Senators Spanel, Gardner, Oke, Brown, Swecker, Franklin, Kline, B. Sheldon, Shin, Bauer, Eide, Patterson, Haugen, Costa, Kohl-Welles, Rasmussen, Fairley, McAuliffe, Prentice, Fraser, Goings, Hale and Winsley).

Senate Committee on Environmental Quality & Water Resources
House Committee on Agriculture & Ecology

Background: The federal Pipeline Safety Act preempts states from adopting safety or environmental standards. The act does allow states to seek and accept designation as federal agents for the purpose of enforcing existing federal requirements on interstate hazardous liquid pipelines. To date, only four states have obtained this additional designation for hazardous liquid pipelines: Arizona, California, Minnesota, and New York. The federal Office of Pipeline Safety has not allowed additional states to obtain this designation since the mid 1990s.

Many pipeline safety advocates believe the federal Pipeline Safety Act is deficient in two areas: (1) it does not allow states to develop more stringent requirements, and (2) the existing requirements are viewed by some as inadequate.

The state of Washington is presently certified to assume safety responsibilities related to intrastate pipelines, but not interstate pipelines.

Summary: Congress is requested to: (1) amend the federal Pipeline Safety Act to allow states to adopt and enforce standards that are stricter than the current federal standards; (2) allow the states to seek authority to administer and enforce the federal pipeline laws; and (3) increase funding for both state and federal efforts to ensure pipeline safety and for states to respond to pipeline accident emergencies.

The President is requested to direct the federal Office of Pipeline Safety to grant qualified states the authority to enforce federal standards.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	46 0
House	97 0