

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 2768

AS REPORTED BY COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES,
FEBRUARY 20, 1992

Brief Description: Allowing technical assistance officers for the department of ecology.

SPONSORS: House Committee on Environmental Affairs (originally sponsored by Representatives Horn, Rust, Bowman, D. Sommers, Van Luven, Neher, Bray, Edmondson, Brough, Wynne, Brekke and Tate)

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Metcalf, Chairman; Oke, Vice Chairman; Amondson, Barr, Conner, Owen, Snyder, Sumner, and Sutherland.

Staff: Ats Kiuchi (786-7708)

Hearing Dates: February 20, 1992

BACKGROUND:

The Department of Ecology is responsible for enforcing the state's air, water, and solid and hazardous waste laws. In general, the department is required to enforce violations when they occur.

In 1988, state law was enacted directing the Department of Ecology to develop a waste reduction program to provide technical assistance to entities interested in reducing the amount of solid or hazardous waste they generated. The law specifically prohibited employees of the program from issuing citations, notices, or civil penalties.

SUMMARY:

The Department of Ecology is authorized to appoint one or more technical assistance officers to provide on-site consultation to businesses for the purpose of helping businesses comply with environmental regulations. The technical assistance officer may report violations to others within the department, but cannot issue violations unless persons or property are at risk.

The state, department, and technical officers are not liable for technical assistance given or for lack of technical assistance.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: requested January 24, 1992

TESTIMONY FOR:

The technical assistance rendered would be helpful to smaller businesses. Assistance, correction and prevention of a problem are often more productive than strict enforcement and penalties.

TESTIMONY AGAINST: None

TESTIFIED: Representative Jim Horn, prime sponsor; Gary Smith, Independent Business Assn. (pro)