

FINAL BILL REPORT

ESHB 1243

C 64 L 03

Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Establishing a biodiesel pilot project for school transportation.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Technology, Telecommunications & Energy (originally sponsored by Representatives Sullivan, Wood, Crouse, Morris and Schoesler).

House Committee on Technology, Telecommunications & Energy
Senate Committee on Natural Resources, Energy & Water

Background:

Biodiesel is a non-petroleum diesel fuel produced from renewable sources such as vegetable oils, animal fats, and recycled cooking oils. It can be blended at any percentage with petroleum diesel or used as a pure product (neat diesel). Other states have adopted policies and incentives to encourage the use of biodiesel.

Biodiesel is registered as a fuel and fuel additive with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and has completed health effects testing requirements of the Clean Air Act. The American Society of Testing and Materials (ASTM) has issued a standard for all biodiesel bought and sold in the United States (Specification D 6751). Blended biodiesel is in use in Washington to fuel some passenger cars and municipal vehicles.

Ultra-low sulfur diesel fuel is a specially refined diesel fuel that has lower sulfur content than regular on-highway diesel. The sulfur content ranges from 15 to 30 parts per million. Regular diesel has a maximum of 500 parts per million of sulfur.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is requiring that all on-highway diesel fuel must meet the ultra-low sulfur diesel standards beginning in 2006.

Summary:

For the school year beginning September 2003, the Superintendent of Public Instruction must conduct a pilot project using biodiesel along with ultra-low sulfur diesel (ULSD) in diesel engine school buses.

The pilot project must include two school districts. Priority is given to districts located in geographic areas identified by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency as areas of concern for pollution emissions.

Conditions of the pilot project for the selected districts include the following:

- ULSD must be used in 25 percent of the school bus fleet for the district or in at least 10 buses for at least one of the pilot districts during the 2003 school year;
- Emissions must be tested prior to the use of ULSD and again six months after commencing use;
- ULSD must be used with 20 percent biodiesel during the 2004 school year in 75 percent, or at least seven, of the school buses that used ULSD in the 2003 school year and one participating district may use a blend of 20 percent biodiesel for the entire pilot period;
- Emissions must be tested after six months of using the biodiesel additive; and
- Maintenance issues must be recorded.

The Superintendent of Public Instruction must report findings from the pilot project to the Legislature by September 1, 2005.

Funding for the pilot project may not use State General Fund moneys.

Votes on Final Passage:

House 81 12

Senate 46 0

Effective: July 27, 2003