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## Environment & Energy Committee

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### HB 2212

**Brief Description:** Reducing microplastic pollution from washing machines.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Pollet, Berry, Ryu, Doglio, Parshley, Ramel, Stearns, Mena, Reed, Callan, Scott, Cortes, Zahn, Wylie, Taylor, Duerr, Gregerson, Thai, Farivar, Macri, Fosse and Donaghy.

#### Brief Summary of Bill

- Restricts the sale of new commercial and industrial washing machines that do not contain microfiber filtration systems, beginning July 1, 2028.
- Requires owners or operators of commercial and industrial washing machines to install microfiber filtration on systems sold prior to 2028 by July 1, 2034.
- Authorizes the Department of Ecology (Ecology) to adopt a rule after July 1, 2030, to require new residential washing machines to be capable of filtering microfibers, but only if Ecology determines that specified criteria are met.

**Hearing Date:** 1/15/26

**Staff:** Jacob Lipson (786-7196).

#### Background:

The Department of Ecology (Ecology) has roles in the regulation of the discharge of wastewater under federal and state water pollution control laws. Ecology is also charged with administering and enforcing restrictions on various types of products based on their environmental attributes, including laws addressing the inclusion of harmful chemicals in certain products and laws restricting specified types of plastic products. Microplastics are categorized by Ecology as a

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contaminant of emerging concern in wastewater, and enter wastewater from laundering synthetic material, such as fleece or polyester products.

**Summary of Bill:**

Beginning July 1, 2028, a person may not sell or offer for sale a new commercial or industrial washing machine unless it is equipped with or contains a microfiber filtration system that meets specified standards (qualifying microfiber filtration system) and bears a visible label with a statement regarding the qualifying microfiber filtration system. A qualifying microfiber filtration system must be active across all washing cycles of a washing machine, have a mesh size of 100 micrometers or less, be independently third-party certified to remove at least 87 percent of microfibers, and either be built into a newly-manufactured washing machine or packaged with and capable of installation with a new washing machine.

Owners and operators of commercial or industrial washing machine sold prior to July 1, 2028, must equip those washing machines with a qualifying microfiber filtration system by July 1, 2034. Owners and operators of commercial or industrial washing machines must also ensure that the filter is checked regularly and is functional, and that captured lint is disposed of in a solid waste collection container.

After July 1, 2030, Ecology may adopt a rule requiring new residential washing machines to be capable of filtering microfibers, but only if either:

- at least one other state, either bordering Washington or representing a meaningful percentage of nationwide residential washing machine sales, has a law in effect requiring new residential washing machines to be capable of filtering microfibers; and
- the costs associated with requiring microfiber filtration will not result in an increase in the median retail price of new residential washing machines by more than 10 percent or will have a median cost of less than \$70.

An Ecology rule to require microfiber filtration in residential washing machines must take effect no earlier than one year after adoption.

Ecology may adopt rules to implement, administer, and enforce requirements related to washing machine microfiber filtration. Ecology may issue corrective action orders to persons out of compliance with microfiber filtration requirements and may impose civil penalties of up to \$5,000 for initial offenses and up to \$10,000 for repeat violations. Orders and penalties issued by Ecology are appealable to the Pollution Control Hearings Board.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on January 5, 2026.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.