

REVENUE: No revenue impact

FISCAL: Fiscal statement issued

Action: Do Pass and Be Referred to the Committee on Ways and Means

Vote: 7 - 2 - 0

Yeas: Clem, Esquivel, Krieger, McKeown, Reardon, Unger, Witt

Nays: Thompson, Whitsett

Exc.: 0

Prepared By: Beth Patrino, Administrator

Meeting Dates: 2/28, 3/28

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: Amends certain statutes related to mineral mining to encompass additional types of mining and makes conforming amendments. Declares emergency, effective upon passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Metal mining is currently regulated under two different statutes
- Consolidated permitting process for chemical mines
- Proposed gold mine in eastern Oregon

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT: No amendment.

BACKGROUND: The Department of Geology and Mineral Industries' (DOGAMI) Mined Land Regulation and Reclamation Program administers the regulatory program for surface and metal mining and oil, gas and geothermal energy extraction in Oregon.

Metal ores are typically processed using one of three processes. The first process uses gravity and water to separate metal from the ore. The second type of process, froth flotation, separates and concentrates ores by altering their surfaces so that they are either repelled or attracted by water. This method may be used as an alternative or in addition to gravity separation. The third type of process leaches metals from the ore using chemicals like acid or cyanide.

In 1991, the Legislative Assembly enacted a new regulatory program for metal mines that use chemicals to leach metals from mined ore. A separate regulatory program currently applies to all other metal mines. House Bill 2248 would apply the chemical mine statutes to all metal mines except those using only gravity separation.