

STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Energy and Environment

Fiscal: No Fiscal Impact

Revenue: No Revenue Impact

Action Date: 06/02/15

Action: Do Pass.

Meeting Dates: 05/21, 06/02

Vote:

Yeas: 8 - Bentz, Boone, Heard, Helm, Johnson, Reardon, Vega Pederson, Weidner

Nays: 1 - Holvey

Prepared By: Beth Patrino, Committee Administrator

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Exempts carbon dioxide emissions from combustion or decomposition of biomass from regulation under certain air pollution laws unless necessary to implement federal Clean Air Act. Defines "biomass." Declares emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Statutory policy provides certainty for industry
- Consistency with state and federal policy to encourage use of biomass

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Biomass, including wood and other plant material, can be used as an energy source through direct combustion of wood chips and pellets or by the conversion of biomass into biofuels such as ethanol and similar energy products. Although these materials release carbon when burned to produce energy, this process has been viewed as "carbon neutral," meaning it is part of a closed loop in which subsequent plant regrowth recaptures the carbon emissions associated with the energy produced.

Senate Bill 752 would exempt carbon dioxide emissions from the combustion or decomposition of biomass from regulation under certain air pollution laws unless it is necessary to implement the federal Clean Air Act.