

HB 2623 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Energy and Environment

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Meeting Dates: 2/7, 2/28

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Imposes statewide moratorium on hydraulic fracturing used in the exploration for, or production of, oil or gas until 2030. Exempts natural gas storage wells, geothermal activities, and existing coal bed methane extraction wells from the definition of "hydraulic fracturing" subject to the moratorium. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

REVENUE: No revenue impact

FISCAL: No fiscal impact

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Changes to federal regulations on hydraulic fracturing
- Oregon Department of Geology and Mineral Industries map showing sites with potential for hydraulic fracturing
- Coal bed methane and gas hydraulic fracturing
- Water and seismic issues

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Hydraulic fracturing, sometimes called "fracking," involves injecting water, sand, and chemicals under high pressure into a bedrock formation via a well. This process creates new fractures in the rock and increases the size and connectivity of existing fractures. This technique is used to increase the permeability of a rock formation and allows the gas, oil, or hot water inside the rock to flow more effectively into the well for extraction. Although the technology has existed since the 1960s, the use of hydraulic fracturing in combination with advances in horizontal drilling has led to a major increase in US oil and natural gas production in recent years. In Oregon, hydraulic fracturing requires a permit and is regulated by the Department of Geology and Mineral Industries, Department of Environmental Quality, and the Water Resources Department.

House Bill 2623 would impose a statewide moratorium on hydraulic fracturing until January 2, 2030.