

HB 2623 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Environment and Natural Resources

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Meeting Dates: 4/23

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Imposes a 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.

No fiscal impact; no revenue impact

House vote: Passed. Ayes, 42; Nays, 12--Barreto, Bonham, Leif, McKeown, Nearman, Noble, Post, Reschke, Smith G, Stark, Wallan, Wilson; Excused, 6--Boles, Findley, Marsh, McLane, Smith DB, Sprenger

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

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 U.S. 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.