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SENATE BILL

55TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2021

INTRODUCED BY

Jeff Steinborn

AN ACT

RELATING TO RADIOACTIVE MATERIALS; AMENDING THE DUTIES AND
COMPOSITION OF THE RADIOACTIVE WASTE CONSULTATION TASK FORCE;
PRESCRIBING RESPONSIBILITIES REGARDING PRIVATE DISPOSAL
FACILITIES; MAKING TECHNICAL CHANGES; DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO:

SECTION 1. Section 74-4A-4 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 1981,
Chapter 374, Section 3, as amended) is amended to read:

"74-4A-4. DEFINITIONS.--As used in the Radioactive and
Hazardous Materials Act:

A. "committee" means the joint interim legislative
radioactive and hazardous materials committee;

B. "disposal" means the long-term isolation of
radioactive material, including ~~[long-term]~~ temporary or
permanent monitored storage, ~~[which]~~ that permits retrieval of

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1 the radioactive material stored and includes the temporary or
2 permanent disposal of all hazardous wastes;

3 C. "environmental evaluation group" means the
4 independent state review facility administratively attached to
5 New Mexico institute of mining and technology and funded by the
6 United States department of energy;

7 D. "hazardous waste" means any garbage, refuse,
8 sludge from a waste treatment plant, water supply treatment
9 plant or air pollution control facility or other discarded
10 material, including solid, liquid, semisolid or ~~[containing]~~
11 gaseous material resulting from industrial, commercial, mining
12 or agricultural operations or from community activities ~~[which]~~
13 that because of its quantity, concentration or physical,
14 chemical or infectious characteristics may cause or
15 significantly contribute to an increase in mortality or an
16 increase in serious irreversible or incapacitating reversible
17 illness or pose a substantial ~~[present]~~ current or potential
18 hazard to human health or the environment when improperly
19 treated, stored, transported, disposed of or otherwise managed.
20 The term "hazardous waste" does not include solid or dissolved
21 material in domestic sewage or animal excrement in connection
22 with farm, ranch or feedlot operations or solid or dissolved
23 materials in irrigation return flows or industrial discharges
24 that are point sources subject to permits under Section 402 of
25 the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, as amended, as the

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1 provisions exist on January 1, 1981, or source, special or
2 byproduct material as defined in the federal Atomic Energy Act
3 of 1954, as amended, as these definitions exist on January 1,
4 1981, or any of the following, until the environmental
5 improvement board determines that they are subject to Subtitle
6 C of the federal Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of
7 1976, as amended (42 U.S.C. 6921 et seq.): drilling fluids,
8 produced waters and other wastes associated with the
9 exploration, development or production of crude oil or natural
10 gas or geothermal energy, any fly ash waste, bottom ash waste,
11 slag waste, flue gas emission control waste generated primarily
12 from the combustion of coal or other fossil fuels, solid waste
13 from the extraction, beneficiation or processing of ores and
14 minerals, including phosphate rock and overburden from the
15 mining of uranium ore or cement kiln dust waste;

16 E. "high-level waste" means the highly radioactive
17 materials produced as a byproduct of the reactions that occur
18 inside nuclear reactors, including spent nuclear fuel, or
19 highly radioactive wastes resulting from the reprocessing of
20 spent nuclear fuel and includes both the liquid waste ~~[which]~~
21 that is produced directly in reprocessing and any solid
22 material into which such liquid waste is made;

23 F. "low-level waste" means material contaminated
24 with radioactive elements emitting beta or gamma particles or
25 with traces of transuranic elements in concentrations of less

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1 than one hundred nanocuries per gram;

2 G. "mixed waste" means any mixture of hazardous
3 waste regulated under the Hazardous Waste Act and radioactive
4 waste regulated under the federal Atomic Energy Act of 1954;

5 H. "radioactive materials" means any material or
6 combination of materials ~~[which]~~ that spontaneously emits
7 ionizing radiation, including high-level waste. Materials in
8 which the estimated specific activity is not greater than 0.002
9 microcuries per gram of material, and in which the
10 radioactivity is essentially uniformly distributed, are not
11 considered to be radioactive materials;

12 I. "radioactive waste" means high-level waste,
13 transuranic contaminated waste and low-level waste;

14 J. "spent nuclear fuel" means nuclear fuel that has
15 been irradiated in and recovered from a civilian nuclear power
16 plant;

17 K. "task force" means the radioactive waste
18 consultation task force; and

19 L. "transuranic contaminated waste" means material
20 contaminated with radionuclides emitting alpha radiation having
21 an atomic number greater than ninety-two, including neptunium,
22 plutonium, americium and curium, in concentrations of greater
23 than one hundred nanocuries per gram."

24 SECTION 2. Section 74-4A-6 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 1979,
25 Chapter 380, Section 5, as amended by Laws 2001, Chapter 12,
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1 Section 1 and also by Laws 2001, Chapter 103, Section 1) is
2 amended to read:

3 "74-4A-6. TASK FORCE.--There is created the "radioactive
4 waste consultation task force". The task force shall consist
5 of the secretaries of energy, minerals and natural resources;
6 health; environment; public safety; ~~[and highway and]~~
7 transportation; homeland security and emergency management; and
8 Indian affairs or their designees. The ~~[chairman]~~ chair and
9 vice ~~[chairman]~~ chair, or their designees from the committee,
10 shall be advisory members of the task force. The state fire
11 marshal or ~~[his]~~ the state fire marshal's designee shall serve
12 as a ~~[non-voting]~~ nonvoting member of the task force."

13 SECTION 3. Section 74-4A-7 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 1979,
14 Chapter 380, Section 6, as amended) is amended to read:

15 "74-4A-7. DUTIES OF THE TASK FORCE.--

16 A. The task force shall negotiate for the state
17 with the federal government in all areas relating to siting,
18 licensing and operation of new federal disposal facilities,
19 including research, development and demonstration, for ~~[high-~~
20 ~~level radioactive wastes, transuranic radioactive wastes and~~
21 ~~low-level]~~ radioactive waste. This subsection shall not be
22 construed to limit the powers of any agency otherwise
23 authorized to negotiate with the federal government, and if
24 such negotiation should also come within the authority of the
25 task force, the task force shall provide assistance to that

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1 agency but shall not limit the agency's exercise of authority.
2 Any action taken pursuant to this subsection may be disapproved
3 by joint resolution of the legislature.

4 ~~[B. The task force may recommend legislation to~~
5 ~~implement the state's policies with respect to new federal~~
6 ~~disposal facilities.~~

7 ~~G.]~~ B. The task force shall identify impacts of new
8 federal and private disposal facilities within the state and
9 shall disseminate that information to the legislature, the
10 governor and the relevant executive departments.

11 C. The task force shall review federal license
12 applications for privately operated disposal facilities in New
13 Mexico and shall evaluate the public safety, environmental,
14 health, infrastructure and transportation impacts and
15 requirements of the proposed facilities. The task force shall
16 transmit the findings of its evaluations to the legislature,
17 the governor and the relevant executive departments.

18 D. The task force may recommend legislation to
19 implement the state's policies with respect to disposal
20 facilities.

21 ~~[D.]~~ E. The task force shall coordinate the
22 investigations and studies undertaken by all state agencies and
23 shall forward an executive summary of ongoing and recently
24 completed investigations and studies, including information
25 from federal or other studies, to the legislature and the

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1 governor as the studies are completed or information released.

2 ~~[E.]~~ F. The task force shall meet ~~[regularly]~~ at
3 least annually with the committee and keep the committee
4 apprised of all actions taken by the task force."

5 SECTION 4. EMERGENCY.--It is necessary for the public
6 peace, health and safety that this act take effect immediately.