

HB 3227 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY
Senate Committee On Energy and Environment

Carrier: Sen. Dembrow

Action Date: 05/18/21
Action: Do pass the A-Eng bill.
Vote: 5-0-0-0
Yeas: 5 - Beyer, Dembrow, Findley, Robinson, Taylor
Fiscal: Has minimal fiscal impact
Revenue: No revenue impact
Prepared By: Beth Reiley, LPRO Analyst
Meeting Dates: 5/13, 5/18

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Prohibits Department of Consumer and Business Services from outlawing, in state building code, the use of refrigerants listed, as of January 1, 2022, under federal regulations (42 U.S.C. 7671k) as safe alternatives to Class I and Class II substances, provided that the safe alternatives are installed in accordance with applicable rules or regulations.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Hydrofluorocarbons are a potent greenhouse gas
- Federal passage of the American Innovation in Manufacturing (AIM) Act
- Provide certainty to industry while transitioning to alternative refrigerants as directed by the AIM Act

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

The Department of Consumer and Business Services (DCBS) is responsible for adopting a state building code that sets standards for the installation and use of mechanical, heating, and ventilating devices and equipment. Refrigerants are substances used in a heat cycle that transfer heat from one area and move it to another, such as in air conditioning or heating units. Refrigerants are heavily regulated due to their toxicity, flammability, and environmental impacts.

Title 42, U.S.C. section 7671k describes the Safe Alternatives Policy, which states, “to the maximum extent practicable, class I and class II substances shall be replaced by chemicals, product substitutes, or alternative manufacturing processes that reduce overall risks to human health and the environment.” In 2020, Congress passed the American Innovation in Manufacturing (AIM) Act to phase down the use of hydrofluorocarbons, or HFCs, which are potent gases used in air conditioners, refrigerators, and other consumer products that have proven negative environmental impacts when released into the atmosphere.

House Bill 3227 A prohibits DCBS from outlawing the use of safe alternative refrigerants in the state building code, provided that the safe alternatives meet federal regulations and installation requirements.