

This C&EN report lists new legislation introduced between March 19 and April 25. Senate and House bills are listed under areas of interest by bill number, primary sponsor, and the committee(s) to which it has been referred.

SENATE

Energy. S. 857, 858, 859—Hart (D.-Colo.). Provide tax credit for oil produced from shale, regulate surface mining of oil shale, set environmental standards for oil shale operations; referred to Finance, Environment & Public Works, Energy & Natural Resources.

Nuclear. S. 742—Percy (R.-Ill.). Sets up new federal panels to coordinate nuclear waste management programs, details procedures for state participation in decisions on siting of such waste repositories; held at desk.

S. 797—Jackson (D.-Wash.). Allows Department of Energy to take title to spent commercial reactor fuel, construct facilities for its storage; referred to Energy & Natural Resources.

S. 798—Hart (D.-Colo.). Sets up Nuclear Regulatory Commission licensing procedures for away-from-reactor storage of spent fuel; referred to Environment & Public Works.*

S. 926—McGovern (D.-S.D.). Suspends for three years granting of future nuclear power plant operating licenses, pending review of existing, potential safety defects; referred to Environment & Public Works.

R&D. S. 700—Danfortn (R.-Mo.). Gives corporations a 10% tax credit for every dollar spent on R&D; referred to Finance.

Specifically, the study found that nearly 33% of the mice exposed to 50,000 ppm of vinyl chloride for one hour developed adenomas of the lung; about 17% of the mice exposed to 5000 ppm also developed adenomas; at 500 ppm 13%, and at 50 ppm 10.1%. By contrast, 10.0% of the animals used as controls (no exposure) developed adenomas.

All of which leads to skepticism among industrial toxicologists. Dow Chemical toxicologist Perry Gehring, for instance, says that because of the high level of pneumonitis among the test mice, "the relevance of the results is highly questionable." He notes, too, that only mice and not rats were affected by the vinyl chloride exposure. "Adenomas in the lungs of mice," Gehring says, "have a very high spontaneous background," particularly when the mice are in physiologically stressful situations such as nearly being anesthetized by vinyl chloride gas.

Yet the Consumer Product Safety Commission in releasing the study concludes that its "findings further support the thesis that a single exposure to a high dose of vinyl chloride, or perhaps other similarly acting carcinogens, could pose a risk of cancer to humans." Dow's Gehring observes that long before vinyl chloride was recognized as a liver carcinogen in the early 1970's, "we knew that 3000 ppm or higher levels were not uncommon-- we should have tumors all over the place [now]."

HOUSE

Energy. H.R. 3749—Murphy (D.-N.Y.). Sets federal standards for siting, construction, operation of liquefied gas facilities in or near the coastal zone; referred to Merchant Marine & Fisheries, Interstate & Foreign Commerce.

Environment. H.R. 3247—Hance (D.-Tex.). Allows federal pre-emption of state laws hindering building of the crude oil pipeline by Sohio between Long Beach, Calif., and Midland, Tex.; referred to Interior & Insular Affairs, Interstate & Foreign Commerce.

Health. H.R. 3132—Holtzman (D.-N.Y.): Establishes interim occupational safety, health standards to protect employees from nonionizing radiation; referred to Education & Labor.

H.R. 3566—Hammerschmidt (R.-Ark.). Extends moratorium on possible saccharin ban by FDA from 18 to 36 months; referred to Interstate & Foreign Commerce.

Nuclear. H.R. 3283—Atkinson (D-Pa.). Prohibits utilities from passing on repair costs and cost of buying substitute power when nuclear power plant is shut down for safety reasons; referred to Interstate & Foreign Commerce

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