

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 102

BY IVERSON

1 A Concurrent Resolution urging the President of  
2 the United States, the United States Environmental  
3 Protection Agency, and the United States Congress,  
4 immediately take all actions necessary in order  
5 to immediately prohibit the use of methyl tertiary  
6 butyl ether as an additive in gasoline.

7 WHEREAS, methyl tertiary butyl ether (MTBE), a  
8 derivative of natural gas, has been used as an octane  
9 booster in gasoline, following the phase-out of leaded  
10 gasoline; and

11 WHEREAS, in the past decade, the petroleum industry  
12 has increased the amount of MTBE added to reformulated  
13 gasoline in order to comply with federally mandated  
14 efforts to improve air quality in the nation's most  
15 polluted areas, and to reduce emissions of benzene and  
16 other ozone-forming aromatic compounds associated with  
17 gasoline; and

18 WHEREAS, a majority of reformulated gasoline sold  
19 throughout the nation contains MTBE, including in the  
20 Northeast where almost all reformulated gasoline  
21 contains at least 11 percent of MTBE; and

22 WHEREAS, the United States Environmental Protection  
23 Agency lists MTBE as a possible human carcinogen; and

24 WHEREAS, methyl tertiary butyl ether, leaking from  
25 underground storage tanks and discharged as unburned  
26 fuel from two-stroke motorboats and jet skies,  
27 migrates readily to water supplies; and

28 WHEREAS, a study by the University of California  
29

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1 found that use of the compound poses a significant  
2 risk of contaminating water supplies, including  
3 groundwater sources; and

4 WHEREAS, methyl tertiary butyl ether has unique  
5 chemical properties that make it highly soluble and  
6 allow it to migrate through drinking water supplies,  
7 giving the water a turpentine odor in minute  
8 quantities; and

9 WHEREAS, methyl tertiary butyl ether does not  
10 degrade as readily as other gasoline additives, which  
11 creates significant clean-up and remediation costs at  
12 contaminated sites; and

13 WHEREAS, it has been reported that New York State  
14 environmental officials compiled a list of 1,500  
15 places where soil or water had been contaminated with  
16 MTBE; and

17 WHEREAS, in Maine, a statewide survey found that 16  
18 percent of drinking wells had detectable amounts of  
19 MTBE; and

20 WHEREAS, in New Jersey, 65 public drinking water  
21 supplies have been contaminated with MTBE; and

22 WHEREAS, in California, MTBE has been ordered to be  
23 phased out of the state's fuel supply by 2002; and

24 WHEREAS, in Iowa, on or after February 1, 2000, it  
25 is illegal to sell motor vehicle fuel that contains  
26 more than 2 percent of MTBE by volume; and

27 WHEREAS, ethanol-blended gasoline is an  
28 environmentally safe oxygenate enhancer that may be  
29 used in reformulated gasoline in order to comply with  
30 the requirements of the federal Clean Air Act; NOW

1 THEREFORE,

2 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE, THE HOUSE OF  
3 REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, That the United States  
4 President, the Administrator of the United States  
5 Environmental Protection Agency, and the United States  
6 Congress, immediately act to prohibit the use of MTBE  
7 as an additive in gasoline sold in this nation; and

8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a copy of this  
9 Resolution be sent by the Secretary of the Senate to  
10 the President of the United States; the Administrator  
11 of the United States Environmental Protection Agency;  
12 the President of the Senate of the United States; the  
13 Speaker of the House of Representatives of the United  
14 States; and members of Iowa's congressional  
15 delegation.

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