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## House bill amends CERCLA, expanding states rights

The Reducing Excessive Deadline Obligations Act (H.R. 2279) passed the House of Representatives 225-188 on January 9. In an attempt to speed up the process and give states more control, the bill amends the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA) to provide fewer deadline regulations and require federal entities to give priority to state and local laws when conducting CERCLA cleanups. Environmental groups, however, are skeptical that the bill provides for due diligence, and the White House has threatened to veto the bill.

CERCLA is the foremost piece of legislation holding corporations responsible chemical, petroleum or otherwise hazardous spills. It imposes a tax on the chemical and petroleum industries, collecting those funds for use in case of hazardous spills or to facilitate in the cleanup of abandoned hazardous waste sites.

Sources: E&E News; Environmental Protection Agency

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