

SENATE BILL REPORT

ESHB 2630

AS OF FEBRUARY 19, 1992

Brief Description: Appointing a fish and wildlife council to raise funds and develop a species conservation curriculum.

SPONSORS: House Committee on Fisheries & Wildlife (originally sponsored by Representatives R. King, Orr, G. Cole, Rust, Horn, Fraser, Morris, R. Meyers, Basich, Leonard, Ogden, Valle, Dellwo, O'Brien, Nelson, Jacobsen, Haugen and J. Kohl)

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FISHERIES & WILDLIFE

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES

Staff: Ross Antipa (786-7413)

Hearing Dates: February 27, 1992

BACKGROUND:

RCW 28A.230.020 provides that all common schools shall give instruction in science with special reference to the environment. In 1987, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) developed environmental education guidelines for Washington schools. In 1990, the State Board of Education adopted a resolution which requires the integration of environmental education in grades K-12. In 1990, the Governor's Council on Environmental Education was created by Executive Order 90-06 as part of the Environment 2010 Action Agenda. The council is moving from a science-oriented approach to environmental education toward integration of science with language arts, math, social studies, health and physical education, with the intent of providing recommendations on environmental issues to SPI and the State Board of Higher Education, among others, and with the intent of supporting interdisciplinary programs in K-12. A focus on the importance of fish and wildlife may be lost in these efforts to broaden environmental education.

The school districts are not required to utilize recommendations from the council or SPI. One mechanism to encourage adoption of recommendations at the district level is to provide incentives such as funding.

SUMMARY:

The Governor is given the option of adding to existing duties of the Governor's Council on Environmental Education or appointing a new Fish and Wildlife Education Council to accomplish the following goals:

(1) Raise and distribute public and private funds for the purpose of providing environmental education programs to public and private elementary and secondary schools. The programs are to emphasize the importance of species conservation and fish and wildlife as indicators of ecosystem health;

(2) Support interdisciplinary programs that integrate fish and wildlife preservation and management with other areas of environmental education; and

(3) Balance educational programs, including economic costs and economic benefits of species conservation.

If a new Fish and Wildlife Education Council is necessary, it shall not commence duties until funding is made available through legislation or donations.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: none requested