

SENATE BILL REPORT

SSB 5445

AS PASSED SENATE, MARCH 18, 1991

Brief Description: Providing for the purchase of state forest lands.

SPONSORS: Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators McDonald, Bluechel, McMullen, Vognild, Bailey and Conner; by request of Commissioner of Public Lands).

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5445 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators McDonald, Chairman; Craswell, Vice Chairman; Bailey, Bauer, Bluechel, Cantu, Gaspard, Hayner, Johnson, L. Kreidler, Metcalf, Niemi, Saling, L. Smith, Talmadge, West, Williams, and Wojahn.

Staff: Michael Groesch (786-7715)

Hearing Dates: March 11, 1991

BACKGROUND:

Continuing expansion of residential development threatens to reduce the amount of sustainable commercial forestry in Washington by reducing the acreage available for forestry. Forest land owners succumb to financial temptation to remove land from forest production as land values related to development rise higher than the prospective profits from timber production.

The Legislature provided a mechanism for the acquisition and management of state forest land during the 1920's and 1930's. That was a period when the lack of reforestation, cut and run forest practices, and land abandonment threatened to reduce the state's timber supply. At that time the Legislature established a statutory maximums which the state may pay for forest land. Those limits range from \$1 to \$6 per acre depending on whether the land is bare or forested.

SUMMARY:

The statutory maximum which may be paid by the state for forest land is changed to fair market value.

The community college forest reserve account is created. Revenues to the account are derived from the management of lands purchased under the authority of this act.

To remove the disincentive to sell forest land to the state, the sale of lands to the state for the purposes of this act are exempt from any compensating tax.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: none

TESTIMONY FOR:

There is a growing need to maintain the commercial forestry base.

TESTIMONY AGAINST: None

TESTIFIED: Nick Handy, DNR (pro)