

SENATE BILL REPORT

ESHB 1529

AS REPORTED BY COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS, APRIL 5, 1993

Brief Description: Reauthorizing certain timber programs.

SPONSORS: House Committee on Trade, Economic Development & Housing (originally sponsored by Representatives Springer, Morton, Chappell, Holm, Campbell, King, Jones, Basich, Rayburn, Sheldon and Kessler; by request of Office of Financial Management)

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRADE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & HOUSING

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRADE, TECHNOLOGY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Majority Report: Do pass as amended and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators Skratek, Chairman; Sheldon, Vice Chairman; Bluechel, Deccio, Erwin, M. Rasmussen, and Williams.

Staff: Jack Brummel (786-7428)

Hearing Dates: March 30, 1993

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Majority Report: Do pass as amended by Committee on Trade, Technology & Economic Development.

Signed by Senators Rinehart, Chairman; Spanel, Vice Chairman; Anderson, Bauer, Bluechel, Gaspard, Hargrove, Hochstatter, Jesernig, McDonald, Moyer, Niemi, Owen, Quigley, Roach, L. Smith, Snyder, Sutherland, Talmadge, West, Williams, and Wojahn.

Staff: Martin Chaw (786-7715)

Hearing Dates: April 5, 1993

BACKGROUND:

Economic assistance is provided to timber communities and the timber industry by coordinating state economic development services in timber communities, by providing technical and other assistance to the timber industry, by increasing financing for economic development-related public infrastructure in timber communities, and by increasing exports from timber communities.

Dislocated timber workers are provided extended unemployment insurance, training and tuition assistance, extension of the Basic Health Plan, mortgage/rental assistance, and social services in timber impacted communities.

The state efforts are coordinated by an Economic Recovery Coordination Board, an Agency Timber Task Force, and a Timber Recovery Coordinator.

Increased financing for public infrastructure in timber communities is provided through the Community Economic Revitalization Board, the Public Works Trust Fund, and the Development Loan Fund. A separate account under the Community Economic Revitalization Board finances economic development-related infrastructure in timber communities without requiring that the loan or grant be tied to a specific business. The Public Works Trust Fund can be used for new public infrastructure in timber communities. Timber communities are added as a priority for the Development Loan Fund.

The Economic Recovery Coordination Board, the Agency Timber Task Force, the Timber Recovery Coordinator, and several of the financing programs expire on June 30, 1993.

SUMMARY:

The timber programs in the Public Works Trust Fund and the timber Community Economic Recovery Board (CERB) are extended to June 30, 1995. Unemployment benefits for dislocated timber workers are extended to cover workers who become unemployed through July 1, 1995. The benefits can be received until the person finishes approved training plus five more weeks. An unemployed person from a plant that closes after November 1, 1992, who did not develop a required training plan due to good cause is allowed additional time to complete the plan.

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED SENATE AMENDMENT:

The Economic Recovery Coordination Board, Agency Timber Task Force, and the Timber Recovery Coordinator are reauthorized for two years to June 30, 1995. The additional unemployment benefit period is one hundred four times the individual's weekly benefit amount.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: available

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect July 1, 1993.

TESTIMONY FOR (Trade, Technology & Economic Development):

Adding the reauthorization of the Agency Task Force, the Timber Team and the coordinator would improve the bill.

This bill is very important to the very people put out of work by the timber downturn. This bill allows retraining and extended benefits necessary for displaced workers to get back on their feet.

TESTIMONY AGAINST (Trade, Technology & Economic Development): None

TESTIFIED (Trade, Technology & Economic Development):
Representative Springer, prime sponsor; Representative Basich (pro); Allen Puttrese, Kim Braaten, Eric Stubb, James Leahy, Henry Smith, dislocated mill workers (pro); Steve Lansing, Lutheran Public Policy Office (pro); Naki Stevens, People for Puget Sound (pro)

TESTIMONY FOR (Ways & Means): None

TESTIMONY AGAINST (Ways & Means): None

TESTIFIED (Ways & Means): No one