

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5082

AS PASSED SENATE, MARCH 5, 1993

Brief Description: Including ratites in poultry farming regulations.

SPONSORS: Senators M. Rasmussen, Barr, Erwin and Bauer

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators M. Rasmussen, Chairman; Loveland, Vice Chairman; Anderson, Barr, Bauer, Newhouse, and Snyder.

Staff: Bob Lee (786-7404)

Hearing Dates: January 18, 1993; February 4, 1993

BACKGROUND:

Ratites are species of flightless birds that include ostrich, emu, and rhea. Ostriches have been raised on farms in the United States and elsewhere in the world since the early 1900's.

There are an increasing number of ostriches and other ratites in the state of Washington. Currently, it is unclear whether these animals are subject to the animal disease control authorities of the Department of Agriculture.

SUMMARY:

Legislative recognition is given that raising ratites is an agricultural pursuit. Ratites are included in the definition of poultry.

Authority is provided to the Department of Agriculture to develop, in consultation with the ratite industry, an individual ratite identification system and to charge fees sufficient to cover the expenses of the department.

The Department of Agriculture is directed, in consultation with the ratite industry, the poultry industry and other affected groups, to review the adequacy of existing animal health regulations that pertain to ratites. The department is to adopt rules as deemed necessary to assure the protection of the ratite and poultry industries from potential importation or spread of contagious diseases and parasites.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: none requested

TESTIMONY FOR:

Ratites have been raised on farms in Washington State. The Department of Agriculture should be granted authority to review and establish a disease control program to assure protection of the ratites and poultry that are here.

TESTIMONY AGAINST: None

TESTIFIED: Pat Durpos, WROA (pro); Wally Caviness, Bellingham Emu Ranch; Nancy Wolf, Wolf Den Ranch (pro); Dr. Robert Mead, State Veterinarian, WSDA; Don and Margie Becker, Canyon Park Ostrich Ranch; Martin Jacobson, Rumples Feather Ranch; Dave and Linda Olson, Chicks-R-Us; Allan F. Potter, Olympic View Ostrich Ranch (pro)