

**SENATE BILL REPORT**

**SB 6578**

**AS OF FEBRUARY 2, 1994**

**Brief Description:** Lessening the economic impact of agricultural burning permits.

**SPONSORS:** Senators Loveland and M. Rasmussen

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON ECOLOGY & PARKS**

**Staff:** Kari Guy (786-7464)

**Hearing Dates:** February 2, 1994

**BACKGROUND:**

Under current law, a permit is required for agricultural burning. The permit system is administered by the Department of Ecology, by local air pollution control authorities, or by counties as delegated by the Department of Ecology. Permits may be issued on a seasonal or individual fire basis. The 1991 Clean Air Washington Act established an agricultural burning practices and research task force. The duties of the task force include setting the permit fee for agricultural burning, identifying best management practices, and identifying research needs. The 1991 act limits the final permit fee to \$2.50 per acre. There is an interim permit fee in place of \$20, valid until January 1995.

**SUMMARY:**

Legislative findings are made that agricultural commodities are a fundamental element of the state economy, and that fees imposed on agricultural burning should take into consideration their economic impact on agricultural commodities.

The fees determined by the agricultural burning practices and research task force are to be the maximum permit fees allowed. Permit fees lower than recommended by the task force may be set by counties based on the extent that best management practices are implemented, and based on the economic impact of the fees on the agricultural economy of the county.

**Appropriation:** none

**Revenue:** none

**Fiscal Note:** none requested