

SENATE BILL REPORT

SJM 8016

AS REPORTED BY COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, FEBRUARY 25, 1993

Brief Description: Requesting investigation and reporting on the E. Coli outbreak.

SPONSORS: Senators M. Rasmussen, Spanel, Haugen, Prince, Loveland, Barr, Erwin, McDonald, Roach, Bauer, Drew, Gaspard, Skratek, McAuliffe, Sheldon, Prentice, Fraser, Rinehart, Deccio, Jesernig, Winsley, Pelz, McCaslin, Sellar, von Reichbauer, Vognild, Moyer, A. Smith, West, Franklin, Wojahn, Hochstatter, Quigley, Anderson, Amondson and Oke

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 8016 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

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

Staff: Bob Lee (786-7404)

Hearing Dates: February 23, 1993; February 25, 1993

BACKGROUND:

The outbreak of E. Coli 0157:H7 infections has caused concern about the adequacy of the federal food safety inspection program as it applies to certain meat products. In Washington State, this strain of bacteria has been designated as a reportable disease. Also, the State Board of Health has adopted a more stringent regulation than many other states that requires food establishments cook hamburger to 155 degrees.

In January, the United States Department of Agriculture indicated that a prompt and full examination would be made into ways on improving the full food chain process to determine how improvements may be made to better guarantee safety of the food supply.

SUMMARY:

In addition to conducting a full examination of the causes and methods to address the E. Coli outbreak, the Federal Food Safety Inspection Service is requested to provide a written report to the Washington State Legislature in January 1994 that explains the changes and improvements that have been accomplished to address this public health issue.

EFFECT OF PROPOSED SUBSTITUTE:

Statistical data on the number of persons affected by the E. Coli outbreak is updated. The items that the federal task force are requested to consider are expanded to also include (a) involving state and local governments in the monitoring and investigation; (b) designating this strain of E. Coli as a reportable disease on a nationwide basis; and (c) initiate a review of the Food and Drug Administration's model food code.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: none requested

TESTIMONY FOR:

It is important to have follow through to see that steps are taken before another outbreak occurs.

TESTIMONY AGAINST: None

TESTIFIED: Karen Van Dusen, DOH; Dan Coyne, Dairy Federation