

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1832

As Reported By House Committee On:
Agriculture & Ecology

Title: An act relating to the transfer of funds to provide for plant pest control activities.

Brief Description: Transferring funds for plant pest control activities.

Sponsors: Representatives Clements, Linville and Lisk.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Agriculture & Ecology: 2/19/97, 2/24/97 [DP].

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & ECOLOGY

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 11 members: Representatives Chandler, Chairman; Parlette, Vice Chairman; Schoesler, Vice Chairman; Linville, Ranking Minority Member; Anderson, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Cooper; Delvin; Koster; Mastin; Regala and Sump.

Staff: Kenneth Hirst (786-7105).

Background: State law authorizes the director of the Department of Agriculture to establish a fee-for-service program to provide, upon request, services to parties for special inspections and other special certifications and activities needed to facilitate the movement or sale of plant products or bees and related products. Monies collected from providing these services are deposited in the Plant Pest Account in the Agricultural Local Fund. Monies from the account are used, without appropriation, to provide these services on a revolving account basis.

The horticultural laws establish or authorize the director of the Department of Agriculture to establish standards and grades for horticultural plants and products. For the purposes of these laws, the state is divided into three horticultural inspection districts to which the director assigns inspectors-at-large to provide inspection services. The fees they collect for these services are deposited in an Horticultural District Fund in the district. The district fund is used on a revolving account basis by the inspectors to defray their expenses for providing the services. Some of the monies in the district fund are also to be transferred to the state Horticulture Inspection Trust Fund. The state fund is used to reimburse certain expenses for the

horticulture program incurred at the state level and for making certain refundable transfers to district funds. If, at the end of the fiscal year, there are monies in the district fund beyond those needed to defray expenses from that fiscal year, the excess is to be used to reduce the fees charged for services in the succeeding fiscal year.

By rule, Horticultural Inspection District 2 is made up of Kittitas, Klickitat, Skamania, Yakima, and a portion (the Prosser, Kiona, and Benton City areas) of Benton County.

Summary of Bill: From monies in the district fund derived from state inspections of tree fruits, the inspector for Horticultural Inspection District 2 may transfer \$200,000 to the Plant Pest Account. The transferred monies are to be used solely for apple maggot control activities in the district. The transfer is to take place by June 1, 1997. Any portion of this amount that is unexpended by June 30, 1999, is to be returned to the district fund. In lieu of fees, funds deposited in the Plant Pest Account may be disbursed to provide services.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

Testimony For: (1) If an apple maggot population jumps the current quarantine line into apple production areas, the financial impact could be enormous; it could result in a state-wide quarantine. Five of the insects were trapped in the Yakima area. The response was rapid. Since no additional apple maggots have been trapped or detected in the area, it is likely the insect was eradicated in the area and that no apple maggot population has been established there. This bill will allow the spending of monies to ensure that no population will be established there. (2) This is a case in which an ounce of prevention is worth a ton of cure.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Representative Clements, prime sponsor; Mary Beth Lang, Department of Agriculture; and Dick Ducharme, Yakima Growers and Shippers Association (in favor).