

ANALYSIS OF HB 2055

*House Agriculture & Ecology Committee
1997*

February 24,

BACKGROUND:

Organic Certification. The Director of Agriculture may adopt a fee schedule for recovering the full costs of the Department of Agriculture for administering an organic food program. The fees are to be deposited in the Agricultural Local Fund and used solely for carrying out the certification program. (RCW 15.86.070.)

Initiative 601. Initiative 601 was approved by the voters at the November 1993 general election. Section 8 of the initiative states that no fee may increase in any fiscal year by a percentage in excess of the fiscal growth factor for that fiscal year without prior legislative approval. (RCW 43.135.055.) The fiscal growth factor for a fiscal year is the average of the sum of inflation and population change for each of the prior three fiscal years. (RCW 43.135.025(6).)

SUMMARY:

The Director of Agriculture may set a schedule of fees for the organic certification program that is, for FY 1998, in excess of the fiscal growth factor.