

HOUSE BILL REPORT

ESB 5959

As Passed House

April 11, 1997

Title: An act relating to seed potato production.

Brief Description: Allowing for the establishment of restricted seed potato production areas.

Sponsors: Senators Anderson and Morton.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Agriculture & Ecology: 3/31/97, 4/3/97 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 4/11/97, 94-2.

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: Legislation enacted in 1986 gave the director of the Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) regulatory authority over the production of rapeseed (canola) by variety and geographical location. This authority is granted until a rapeseed commodity commission is created to assume that regulatory authority.

The planting stock laws allow the director to conduct inspections and issue certificates stating that planting stock is certified or registered planting stock.

Summary of Bill: Growers of seed potatoes, certified under the state's laws for planting stock, may submit a petition to the director of the WSDA requesting the establishment of a restricted seed potato production area. The petition must identify the geographic boundaries of the area and the types of restrictions proposed for growing non-seed potatoes. It must be signed by at least 50 percent of the growers of seed potatoes who have produced at least 50 percent of the certified seed potatoes in the area within the previous two years.

Within 60 days of receiving the petition, the director must investigate the need for establishing the area. The director may adopt rules to establish restricted seed potato production areas to prevent the increased exposure to plant diseases and insect pests that adversely affect the ability to meet standards for certification of seed potatoes established under the planting stock laws.

The director may bring an action to enjoin a violation of these procedures or a rule adopted under them.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: The bill will not impact the budget of the WSDA. Growers will provide the funds needed for scientific data and notification.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Mike Schwisow, Washington State Seed Potato Commission (in favor).