

SENATE BILL REPORT

2SSB 5842

As Passed Senate, March 18, 1997

Title: An act relating to litter control and recycling.

Brief Description: Pertaining to litter control and recycling.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Swecker, Winsley and Fraser).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Agriculture & Environment: 2/25/97, 3/5/97 [DPS-WM].
Ways & Means: 3/10/97 [DP2S].
Passed Senate, 3/18/97, 43-3.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & ENVIRONMENT

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5842 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators Morton, Chair; Swecker, Vice Chair; Fraser, McAuliffe, Oke and Rasmussen.

Staff: Kari Guy (786-7437)

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Majority Report: That Second Substitute Senate Bill No. 5842 be substituted therefor, and the second substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators West, Chair; Strannigan, Vice Chair; Bauer, Brown, Fraser, Hochstatter, Kohl, Long, Loveland, McDonald, Roach, Rossi, Schow, Sheldon, Snyder, Spanel, Swecker and Winsley.

Staff: Cathy Baker (786-7708)

Background: The 1971 Legislature enacted the Model Litter Control and Recycling Act to control and recycle litter in the state. To fund these efforts, the Legislature imposed a tax on the value of certain products manufactured or sold within the state, to be collected annually. The rate of .015 percent is imposed on the gross proceeds of the manufacture, wholesale, or retail of certain products, including food, cigarettes, soft drinks, newspapers, and other grocery products.

In 1992 the act was amended to change the allocation of litter account revenues. The act requires that 40 to 50 percent of revenues must be used for youth programs for litter pickup, and to enforce compliance with the litter tax. The remaining revenues are to be used for

programs for public education and awareness, and programs to foster private recycling efforts, encourage recycling, and develop markets for recyclable materials.

For the 1995-1997 biennium, revenue from the litter account was allocated as follows:

- 27 percent for the Ecology Youth Corps litter pickup program;
- 40 percent for Department of Ecology waste reduction and recycling programs;
- 26 percent to the Clean Washington Center for market development for recycled materials;
- 5 percent to the Department of Natural Resources for litter pickup by correction camp crews;
- less than 1 percent to the State Parks and Recreation Commission for recycling efforts in state parks; and
- 1 percent for tax administration by the Department of Revenue.

Summary of Bill: After July 30, 1997, expenditures from the litter control account must be used as follows:

- 55 percent for youth litter patrol programs;
- 15 percent to provide grants to local government for litter cleanup;
- 15 percent for public education and awareness programs;
- The remainder for Department of Revenue administrative costs and Department of Ecology costs for policy development, planning, and technical assistance for recycling.

The litter tax is collected by the Department of Revenue on a quarterly basis.

The litter account may be used for litter cleanup by correctional work crews. The Department of Ecology is authorized to enter into an interagency agreement with the Department of Corrections to provide for litter cleanup in areas that are not accessible to youth crews.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For (Agriculture & Environment): The litter tax was intended to be used for litter control, and this bill would return the funds to that use. Quarterly collection of the tax will increase revenues.

Testimony Against (Agriculture & Environment): The distribution of funds will have a large impact on Department of Ecology technical assistance programs for local governments. Recycling is an important tool in litter control.

Testified (Agriculture & Environment): Bill Vogler, Washington Association of Counties; Jim Pendowski, Department of Ecology Solid Waste Program; Elizabeth Schrag, Washington State Recycling Association; Bob Gee, WRA/WFI (pro); Stewart Simon, Safeway (pro); Dick Ducharme, Beer and Wine Wholesalers Association of Washington (pro); Bill Fritz, Reynolds Aluminum Co. (pro).

Testimony For (Ways & Means): The bill will help increase the state's litter cleanup efforts. It will provide additional funds for the Department of Revenue to increase compliance with the tax.

Testimony Against (Ways & Means): The distribution of funds will have a large impact on Department of Ecology technical assistance programs for local governments.

Testified (Ways & Means): Bob Gee, WA Food Industry (pro); Dan Silver, Department of Ecology.

House Amendment(s): Allocation of the litter control account is changed as follows:

- 50 percent for youth litter programs.
- 20 percent to provide grants to local governments for litter clean up.
- 30 percent for public education and awareness programs; programs to foster local waste reduction and recycling efforts; and to increase compliance with the litter tax.

The Department of Ecology is directed to convene a task force to review and make recommendations on the waste reduction, recycling, and Model Litter Control Act. The task force consists of representatives from the Legislature, state agencies, cities, counties, private recyclers, and industry groups paying the litter tax. The task force must submit specific recommendations to the Legislature by December 1, 1997 on allocation of the litter account, litter tax compliance, and coordination of state and local litter pickup programs.