

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6185

As of January 14, 1998

Title: An act relating to apiaries.

Brief Description: Regulating apiaries.

Sponsors: Senators Morton and Rasmussen; by request of Department of Agriculture.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Agriculture & Environment: 1/19/98.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & ENVIRONMENT

Staff: Bob Lee (786-7404)

Background: In 1994, a pollination service fee was established by statute to generate money to replace the general fund appropriation for the administration of the apiary program by the Department of Agriculture. The shift was a result of a larger budgetary change made by the Office of Financial Management to reduce the amount of general fund money appropriated to the Department of Agriculture.

Under the 1994 legislation, the pollination service fee of 50 cents per hive was established. The fee is paid by the grower of the agricultural crop to the beekeeper. The beekeeper then remits the pollination fee to the department.

A hive registration fee funds the remainder of the program. The fee schedule is set by rule of the department. The fee ranges from \$5 for persons with 1-5 hives to \$300 for those with more than 1,000 hives. In 1997, 532 beekeepers paid the registration fee.

Existing law requires that packaged bees, queens, hives and used beekeeping equipment be inspected prior to coming into the state.

The current Apiary Advisory Committee consists of six apiarists, three growers, the Director of Agriculture, and a representative appointed by Washington State University.

Summary of Bill: The person required to pay the pollination service fee is shifted from the grower to the beekeeper or broker.

The mandatory registration fee for beekeepers with under five hives is eliminated, but those persons may voluntarily choose to register and pay the registration fee.

Authority is established for the department to recover costs of seminars, field days and other educational activities.

The requirement for mandatory inspection prior to coming into this state is eliminated. Instead, the director may require certificates of inspection certifying compliance with requirements prior to shipment bees or used beekeeping equipment.

The membership of the apiary advisory committee is increased by one member to represent bee brokers. Only persons who are registered with the department may serve on the Apiary Advisory Committee.

Authority is provided to increase fees in excess of the fiscal growth factor during the year ending December 31, 1998.

The following authorities are maintained: to impound abandoned hives; adopt rules specifying the identification of bee hives, rules for netting or otherwise handling bees in transit, prescribing bee breeding procedures to prevent importation of Africanized honey bees, setting colony strengths for bee hives; authorizing access for inspection of hives and equipment; and the establishment by counties of apiary coordinated areas.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 12, 1998.

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