

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6584

As of January 27, 1998

Title: An act relating to damage by marine mammals.

Brief Description: Providing for compensation for damages caused by marine mammals.

Sponsors: Senators Oke and Snyder.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Natural Resources & Parks: 2/5/98.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES & PARKS

Staff: Ross Antipa (786-7413)

Background: Marine mammals prey on a wide variety of fish life, including pen-reared finfish. Despite the use of double netting, marine mammal predation upon net-reared salmon is significant.

The Department of Fish and Wildlife pays damage claims for crop loss due to deer and elk damage. The same principle could be used to compensate net-pen finfish farmers for the effects of marine mammal predation.

Summary of Bill: The Director of the Department of Fish and Wildlife must consider damages to net-pen finfish by marine mammals for monetary compensation. Damages may include marine mammal damage to net-pens, lost profits, consequential damages, and other damages. The director may adopt rules for administering the marine mammal damage program.

Claimants must notify the department within ten days of the damage and submit a written claim within 60 days.

Payments are not authorized if: (1) claimant did not use applicable and legal prevention methods; (2) specific funding has been fully utilized or is not available; and (3) damages are covered by insurance.

Claimants have 60 days to agree to accept compensation.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 27, 1998.

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