

SENATE BILL REPORT

SJM 8025

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Natural Resources & Parks, February 6, 1998

Brief Description: Regarding the "Teaming With Wildlife" campaign.

Sponsors: Senators Jacobsen, Oke, Fraser, Kline, Spanel and Rasmussen.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Natural Resources & Parks: 2/3/98, 2/6/98 [DPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES & PARKS

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Joint Memorial No. 8025 be substituted therefor, and the substitute joint memorial do pass.

Signed by Senators Oke, Chair; Rossi, Vice Chair; Jacobsen, Prentice, Snyder, Spanel, Stevens and Swecker.

Staff: Vic Moon (786-7469)

Background: There are two major sources of federal funding for wildlife programs. The federal Pittman-Robertson and the Wallop-Breaux funds are administered by the Department of Fish and Wildlife. They help all of the states protect fish and wildlife resources. These two funding sources come from taxes on firearms, ammunition, bows and arrows, fishing tackle, motor boat and small engine fuels and a few other small sources. There is no funding source from the non-consumptive users of fish and wildlife, those people who like to look at wildlife and enjoy wildlife, but do not fish and hunt.

A large majority of Washington State residents and visitors actively pursue the state's diverse fish and wildlife resources and 75 percent of those who responded to a 1996 opinion survey said that observing and learning about song birds and other non-game wildlife species is an important part of their lives.

Wildlife recreation is an important part of this state and the national economy. Wildlife recreation had accounted for more than \$350 million in annual retail sales and \$150 million in wages and salaries and almost 8,000 jobs in Washington alone.

Summary of Substitute Bill: Congress is asked to pass legislation which has been proposed by the National Fish and Wildlife Diversity Initiative to create a new, dedicated trust fund for state level fish and wildlife management which would be administered by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: Technical changes are made.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Testimony For: Almost every major recreation and environmental group in the country supports this new proposed federal tax on recreation products. Nonconsumptive users should pay their fair share.

Testimony Against: The federal bill is too vague and does not spell out fund uses clearly.

Testified: John Douglas, Washington Wildlife Federation (pro); Chris Magill, Kitsap Audubon Society (pro); Robbin Polard, Washington State Tourism (pro); Bern Shanks, WDFW Director (pro); Sandi Shell, WDFW Asst. Director (pro); Tom Buckley, Teaming with Wildlife, Washington Coalition Coordinator (pro); Gerald Rowland, Modern Firearm Hunters of Washington (con).