

6204-S

Sponsor(s): Senate Committee on Agriculture & Environment
(originally sponsored by Senator Morton)

Brief Title: Increasing the efficiency of registering and identifying livestock.

SB 6204-S.E - DIGEST

(DIGEST AS ENACTED)

Provides that the board may adopt rules establishing criteria and fees for the permanent renewal of brands registered with the department or with the board but renewed as livestock heritage brands. Such heritage brands are not intended for use on livestock.

Declares that if the Washington state livestock identification board with authority and responsibility for administering the livestock identification program is not established by July 31, 1998, the department of agriculture is granted the authorities provided.

Provides that the board may enter into agreements with Washington state licensed and accredited veterinarians, who have been certified by the board, to perform livestock inspection.

Declares that if the Washington state livestock identification board with authority and responsibility for administering the livestock identification program is not established by July 31, 1998, the department of agriculture is granted all of the authorities provided.

VETO MESSAGE ON SB 6204-S

April 1, 1998

To the Honorable President and Members,
The Senate of the State of Washington
Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am returning herewith, without my approval as to sections 1, 2, 3, 4, and 7 through 101, Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill No. 6204 entitled:

"AN ACT Relating to livestock identification;"

ESSB 6204 would transfer program administration for livestock inspection to a seven-member board, all of whose voting members would be industry representatives. The board would administer a regulatory program with rule-making, fee-setting and enforcement powers. It would use its budget without legislative appropriation and be given a vast array of responsibilities, including entering into agreements with other states on behalf of Washington.

This approach is fraught with problems, conflicts of interest, and lacks any accountability to the public. But most seriously, the underlying problem « the inadequate fee system under the current law « is not remedied by this bill. Under this bill, the program fund balance would still be \$187,000 in the red at the end of the current biennium and \$193,000 in the red at the end of next biennium. It is unacceptable for the Legislature to continue

avoiding the difficult issue of inadequate funds, and instead simply create a new entity to oversee livestock inspections.

I do support section 5 of this bill, which will allow families to register "heritage brands" that have been in their families for many years, and section 6, which will enable veterinarians to be certified to conduct livestock identification.

For these reasons, I have vetoed sections 1, 2, 3, 4, and 7 through 101 of Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill No. 6204.

With the exception of 1, 2, 3, 4, and 7 through 101, Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill No. 6204 is approved.

Respectfully submitted,
Gary Locke
Governor