

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1370

As Reported By House Committee On:
Agriculture & Ecology

Title: An act relating to the fruit and vegetable district fund.

Brief Description: Extending the period of time to expend funds from the fruit and vegetable district fund.

Sponsors: Representatives G. Chandler, Linville, Clements, Grant and B. Chandler.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Agriculture & Ecology: 2/2/99, 2/19/99 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Extends the date by which monies transferred from a district fruit and vegetable fund must be expended for apple maggot control activities or be returned to the district fund.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & ECOLOGY

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 14 members: Representatives G. Chandler, Republican Co-Chair; Linville, Democratic Co-Chair; Cooper, Democratic Vice Chair; Koster, Republican Vice Chair; Anderson; B. Chandler; Delvin; Fortunato; Grant; Reardon; Schoesler; Stensen; Sump and Wood.

Staff: Kenneth Hirst (786-7105).

Background:

State law authorizes the director of Agriculture to establish a fee-for-service program to provide services to growers and others for special inspections and certifications, identifications, diagnostic services, and activities needed to facilitate the movement or sale of plant products or bee products. Monies collected from providing these services are deposited in the Plant Pest Account in the Agricultural Local Fund.

Other laws require the director of Agriculture to establish standards and grades for certain fruits and vegetables and allow the director to establish them for other fruits and vegetables. For the purposes of these laws, the state is divided into not less than three fruit and vegetable inspection districts. The fees collected for these services are deposited in a district fund, which is used as a revolving fund to carry out services within the district. Some of the monies in the district fund are also transferred to the state Fruit and Vegetable Inspection Trust Account.

In 1997, legislation authorized a transfer of \$200,000 in District Number Two funds to the Plant Pest Account for activities related to apple maggot control. Funds from this transfer that are unexpended by June 30, 1999, are to be returned to the district fund.

By rule, District Number Two is made up of Kittitas, Klickitat, Skamania, Yakima, and a portion (the Prosser, Kiona, and Benton city areas) of Benton county.

Summary of Bill:

The date by which monies transferred from the district fund of District Number Two must be expended from the Plant Pest Account for apple maggot control activities or be returned to the district fund is extended to June 30, 2001 (from June 30, 1999).

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect on June 30, 1999.

Testimony For: (1) This bill is about trade. While other trade barriers are disappearing, requirements for phyto-sanitary certificates are being used to keep products from being imported. This bill allows our growers to get the certificates they need. (2) The monies need to be available to ensure that our commercial growing areas are apple maggot free, which allows our state's fruit to move in international markets.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: (In favor) Dave Reed, Yakima Growers' and Shippers' Association; and Mary Beth Lang, Department of Agriculture.