

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HJM 4008

As Passed House:
March 11, 1999

Brief Description: Requesting support for the full federal appropriation to fund state aquatic nuisance species management plans.

Sponsors: Representatives Regala, Sump, Linville, G. Chandler and Haigh.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Natural Resources: 2/12/99, 2/24/99 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 3/11/99, 96-0.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requests the federal government to fund state aquatic nuisance species management plans for the full amount authorized by Congress.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 12 members: Representatives Buck, Republican Co-Chair; Regala, Democratic Co-Chair; Anderson, Democratic Vice Chair; Sump, Republican Vice Chair; G. Chandler; Clements; Doumit; Eickmeyer; Ericksen; Pennington; Rockefeller and Stensen.

Staff: Bill Lynch (786-7092).

Background:

The introduction of nonindigenous aquatic species into the waters of the United States causes environmental and economic problems because they have few natural enemies in their new environment. These aquatic nuisance species have the potential to cause large damage to the state because they are so invasive and can destroy native plant and animal habitat. These species can also clog waterways, reduce recreational opportunities, and negatively impact irrigation and power generation. Aquatic nuisance species may be

plant or animal, and include European green crabs, zebra mussels, Chinese mitten crabs, spartina, and hydrilla.

Summary of Bill:

Congress has authorized the expenditure of \$4 million annually to fund the implementation of state management plans to minimize the environmental and economic damage caused by aquatic nuisance species. After a state plan has been approved by the Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service may fund up to 75 percent of the cost to implement the plan. In recent years, only \$200,000 has been appropriated annually to fund implementation of these management plans. The management plan for Washington identifies \$1,700,000 in additional funding needed to address aquatic nuisance species problems.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Testimony For: Washington is one of four states with approved state management plans for addressing aquatic nuisance species. The state is eligible for federal money that becomes available. Federal assistance is inadequate. The spread of zebra mussels in recent years has been held in check because of state efforts. Green crabs have been found in Grays Harbor, and Chinese mitten crabs have been found in the Columbia river. The President recently adopted an executive order regarding noxious weeds. The timing is good to send a message because there is heightened awareness.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Representative Debbie Regala, prime sponsor; Scott Smith, Department of Fish and Wildlife; Kevin Anderson, Puget Sound Action Team; and Lisa Lantz, Noxious Weed Control Board.