

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5619

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Natural Resources, Parks & Recreation, March 1, 1999

Title: An act relating to forest fire protection assessment.

Brief Description: Increasing the assessment for forest fire protection.

Sponsors: Senator Jacobsen; by request of Office of Financial Management.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Natural Resources, Parks & Recreation: 2/8/99, 3/1/99 [DPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES, PARKS & RECREATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5619 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Jacobsen, Chair; T. Sheldon, Vice Chair; Hargrove, Morton, Oke, Rossi, Snyder, Spanel and Stevens.

Staff: Victor Moon (786-7469)

Background: The Department of Natural Resources provides fire protection on private lands, which is funded partially by an assessment on private landowners and partially by the general fund. Fire protection includes both preventive measures and the actual fighting of fires when they occur. Forest landowners of small parcels can get a refund for fire assessments on more than one parcel in each county where they own land.

Summary of Substitute Bill: Forest landowners of small parcels must apply to the county only once to receive a fire assessment refund for excess payments. The landowner must notify the county of any change in ownership.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: All of the fire assessment language is deleted and the new language relates only to refunds on small parcels.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: Assessments need to be increased to fund the 1999-2001 budget request.

Testimony Against: The entire program needs to be adjusted in the light of the major forest fire funding study done two years ago.

Testified: PRO: Marsh Taylor, OFM. CON: Tim Boyd, WFPA, Dave Crooker, Plum Creek Timber; Kevin Godbent, Weyerhaeuser; Bill Howard, Boise Cascade; Nels Hanson, Washington Farm Forestry Association; John Hassell, Simpson Timber.