

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SHB 1891

As Amended by the Senate

Title: An act relating to international marketing of agriculture.

Brief Description: Increasing the international trade of Washington state agricultural products.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives Mulliken, Schoesler, Veloria, B. Chandler, Van Luven, Linville, G. Chandler, Conway and Dunn).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Trade & Economic Development: 2/20/01, 2/22/01 [DP];

Appropriations: 3/2/01, 3/8/01 [DPS].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 3/12/01, 98-0.

Senate Amended.

Passed Senate: 4/9/01, 49-0.

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Creates two programs designed to promote the marketing of Washington's agricultural products by (1) combining public and private funds to market agricultural products to domestic and foreign buyers; and (2) assisting commodity groups in addressing trade barriers that hinder their access to foreign markets.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRADE & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 12 members: Representatives Van Luven, Republican Co-Chair; Veloria, Democratic Co-Chair; Dunn, Republican Vice Chair; Eickmeyer, Democratic 1st Vice Chair; Fromhold, Democratic 2nd Vice Chair; Ahern, Gombosky, Jackley, Mulliken, O'Brien, Pflug and Woods.

Staff: Kenny Pittman (786-7392).

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 31 members: Representatives Sehlin, Republican Co-Chair; H. Sommers, Democratic Co-Chair; Barlean, Republican Vice Chair; Doumit, Democratic Vice Chair; Lisk, Republican Vice Chair; Alexander, Benson, Boldt, Buck, Clements, Cody, Cox, Dunshee, Fromhold, Gombosky, Grant, Kagi, Keiser, Kenney, Kessler, Lambert, Linville, Mastin, Mulliken, Pearson, Pflug, Ruderman, D. Schmidt, Schual-Berke, Talcott and Tokuda.

Staff: Jeff Olsen (786-7157).

Background:

The Washington Department of Agriculture (WDA) is the designated state agency for the administration and implementation of state agricultural marketing development programs and activities. These marketing programs and activities are designed to promote the sale of Washington's agricultural products in domestic and foreign markets.

The WDA is directed to assist in the promotion of Washington's agricultural products by: (1) acting as an effective intermediary between foreign nations and Washington traders; (2) encouraging and promoting the movement of foreign and domestic agricultural goods through Washington's ports; (3) conducting an active program by sending representatives to, or engaging representatives in, foreign countries to promote the state's agricultural commodities and products; (4) encouraging the production of those commodities that will have high export potential and appeal; (5) coordinating the trade promotional activities of appropriate federal, state, and local public agencies, as well as civic organizations; and (6) developing a coordinated marketing program with the Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development, using existing trade offices and participating in mutual trade missions and activities.

Summary:

A series of programs are developed in the WDA that are designed to: (1) promote the marketing of Washington's agricultural products; and (2) reduce trade barriers that hinder the export of Washington's agricultural products.

Market Development and Promotion Matching Fund Program

A Marketing Development and Promotion Matching Fund Program is created in the Department of Agriculture. The program provides funds, which must be matched by funds from the agricultural industry, to hire a contractor to market and promote Washington's agricultural products in certain markets. The goal of the program is to expose domestic and foreign buyers of Washington's diverse agricultural products.

Trade Barrier Matching Fund Program

A Trade Barrier Matching Fund Program is created in the Department of Agriculture. The program provides matching funds to large and small commodity groups to assist them in addressing trade barriers that hinder the export of Washington's agricultural goods to foreign markets. The department has sole discretion on the distribution of the matching funds.

EFFECT OF SENATE AMENDMENT(S):

The Senate amendment: (1) changes a portion of existing language in the section on the trade barrier matching fund program into a legislative intent subsection; (2) divides the section regarding the trade barrier matching fund into two subsections; and (3) attaches the bill's section codification instructions to the individual sections.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed. However, the bill is null and void if not funded in the budget.

Testimony For: (Trade & Economic Development) Agriculture is a major component to Washington's economy. They are facing increased competition at both the domestic and foreign level. The state needs to increase its agricultural marketing budget and target its efforts on a domestic and international basis. The state's agricultural community is also facing trade barriers that reduce their access to other foreign markets. The state needs to work with its commodity commissions to reduce those unfair trade barriers.

Testimony For: (Appropriations) Agriculture is the second largest industry in Washington, and has economic impacts for trucking, shipping, and many other sectors of the economy. The agricultural industry needs assistance promoting and marketing products and working on trade barrier issues. State funds would be matched with industry funds to address problems with trade barriers and promote Washington agricultural products. Washington's marketing program is 50 percent the size of Oregon's program.

Testimony Against: (Trade & Economic Development) None.

Testimony Against: (Appropriations) None.

Testified: (Trade & Economic Development) Representative Mulliken, prime sponsor; and Charlie Brown, Washington State Potato Commission.

Testified: (Appropriations) Representative Mulliken, prime sponsor; and Charlie Brown, Washington State Potato Commission.