

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SHB 1897

As Passed House:

March 9, 2001

Title: An act relating to agricultural fairs.

Brief Description: Modifying requirements to receive state allocations for an agricultural fair.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives Delvin, Hankins, Poulsen, Grant, B. Chandler, Mastin and G. Chandler).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Appropriations: 2/21/01, 2/26/01 [DPS].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 3/9/01, 93-0.

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Allows county fairs that have operated at least two years to reorganize as an area fair and be eligible for state fair funding.

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, McIntire, Mulliken, Pearson, Pflug, Ruderman, D. Schmidt, Schual-Berke, Talcott and Tokuda.

Staff: Jeff Olsen (786-7157).

Background:

The Fair Fund allocates funding to qualifying fairs to encourage agricultural fairs and train rural youth. Fairs eligible for state fair funding allocations are divided into four

categories:

- Area Fairs - Fairs that are not under the jurisdiction of boards of county commissioners and are organized to serve an area larger than one county;
- County and District Fairs - Fairs organized to serve the interests of a single county that are under the control and supervision of the county commissioners of their respective counties;
- Community Fairs - Fairs organized primarily to serve a smaller area than an area or county fair; and
- Youth Shows and Fairs - Fairs approved by agents of the Washington State University or the Superintendent of Public Instruction that serve three or more counties.

Before a fair may be eligible to receive state fair funding allocations it must have conducted two consecutive fairs immediately preceding an application for funding. Between January 1994 and June 1997 the director of the Department of Agriculture had the authority to waive the two-year operating requirement for county fairs that had received fair funding and reorganized as an area fair.

Summary of Bill:

The ability of the director of the Department of Agriculture to waive the requirement that an agricultural fair must successfully operate for two years before receiving fair funding allocations no longer expires on June 30, 1997. Specifically, county fairs that have successfully operated for at least two years since January 1, 1994 may reorganize as an area fair and be eligible for state fair funding. The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not Requested.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

Testimony For: The Benton-Franklin County Fair is reorganizing as an area fair, and this bill would allow them to continue to receive support from the Fair Fund. The fair would be managed by a private non-profit rather than the county board, and county commissioners are in support of this change.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Representative Delvin, prime sponsor; Heather Hansen, Washington State Fairs Association; and Leslie Emerick, Washington State Department of Agriculture.