

SENATE BILL REPORT

HJM 4022

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Agriculture & International Trade, March 1, 2002

Brief Description: Urging Canadian and United States authorities to address border issues.

Sponsors: Representatives Linville, Morris, Barlean, Schual-Berke, Kessler, Conway, Lysen, O'Brien, Benson, Schmidt, Ballasiotes, Kenney and Ericksen.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Agriculture & International Trade: 3/1/02 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Rasmussen, Chair; Parlette, Snyder, Spanel and Swecker.

Staff: Bob Lee (786-7404)

Background: The border between the United States and Canada is the longest undefended border in the world. The two countries have enjoyed years of free flowing transfer of goods between the two countries. The state of Washington is dependent upon international trade. The bulk of Washington's trade with Canada passes through the land borders between Washington and British Columbia.

The events of September 11, 2001, have heightened the need for security along the border between the United States and Canada. On December 12, 2001, Tom Ridge, the Director of U.S. Homeland Security, and John Manley, Deputy Prime Minister of Canada, signed a 30- point agreement that encourages regional and bi-national approaches to address border issues.

The state of Washington, as a member of the Pacific Northwest Economic Region (PNWER) that includes the neighboring Canadian provinces of British Columbia, Alberta, and the Yukon, is involved in the development and implementation of pilot programs to enhance security and efficiency at its borders with Canada.

Summary of Bill: The Senate and the House of Representatives of the state of Washington petition the President of the United States, the Canadian ambassador to the United States, the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and each member of Congress from the state of Washington that the federal governments of the United States and Canada take urgent practical measures to develop a border that will ensure both security and prosperity for citizens of both countries.

These measures include: (a) exploring mechanisms that increase security, reduce risk, and save money; (b) working closely with local jurisdictions to develop solutions and increase cooperation in border management; (c) implementing secure pre-clearance systems and

advanced technology to assist legitimate trade and travel; (d) improving levels of staffing at border crossings; and (e) eliminating duplication of and actively sharing information wherever possible.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Testimony For: None.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: No one.