

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6328

As Passed Senate, February 14, 2002

Title: An act relating to the definition of cherry harvest temporary labor camp.

Brief Description: Changing the definition of cherry harvest temporary labor camp.

Sponsors: Senators Parlette, Gardner, Hale, Honeyford, Rasmussen and Oke.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Labor, Commerce & Financial Institutions: 1/17/02, 1/31/02. [DP]
Passed Senate: 2/14/02, 47-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON LABOR, COMMERCE & FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Prentice, Chair; Keiser, Vice Chair; Benton, Deccio, Fairley, Franklin, Gardner, Hochstatter, Honeyford, Rasmussen, Regala and Winsley.

Staff: Dave Cheal (786-7576)

Background: In 1999 the Departments of Health and Labor and Industries were authorized by the Legislature to develop joint rules that would establish standards for cherry harvest labor camps. This directive was based on a recognition that housing needs for this relatively short, labor intensive harvest are different than for crops that have longer harvest periods. It was also recognized that this harvest takes place entirely during warm weather. Standards for this type of housing are allowed to vary from the standards necessary for longer occupancies. However, the standards are required to be as effective as those adopted under the Washington Industrial Safety and Health Act.

Occupancy of cherry harvest camps built according to these standards is limited to 28 days in any one calendar year.

Summary of Bill: The 28 day per year occupancy limit for cherry harvest farm worker housing facilities is removed. These facilities may be occupied by cherry harvest workers for a period not to exceed one week prior to the commencement of and one week following the conclusion of the cherry harvest within the state.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: It is necessary to change or eliminate the 28 day limitation on occupancy. The cherry harvest lasts longer than that with the result that workers have to move to another

camp, or have no housing at all. The safeguards are that these facilities comply with federal (OSHA) and state (WISHA) standards and can only be used in the cherry harvest.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Chris Cheney, WA Growers League (pro); Jeff Johnson, WA State Labor Council; Dan Fazio, Farm Bureau (pro); Ray Price, Office of Community Development; Michael Wood, L&I (neutral); Alan Lundberg, Lundberg Farms (pro); Ron Walter, Chelan Co. Commissioner (pro); Norm Gutzwiler, grower/horticulturist (pro); Gary Bennett, Dept. of Health (neutral).