

SENATE BILL REPORT

SSJM 8029

As Passed Senate, February 18, 2002

Brief Description: Petitioning to end restrictions on trade of agricultural products with Cuba.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Agriculture & International Trade (originally sponsored by Senators Kohl-Welles, Rasmussen, Swecker, Hewitt, Sheahan, Prentice, Honeyford, Hargrove, Spanel, Hale, Brown, Snyder, Haugen, McAuliffe and Kline).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Agriculture & International Trade: 1/25/02 [DPS].

Passed Senate: 2/18/02, 38-9.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Majority Report: That Substitute Joint Memorial No. 8029 be substituted therefor, and the substitute joint memorial do pass.

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

Staff: Bob Lee (786-7404)

Background: In 2000, Congress enacted the Trade Sanction Reform and Export Enhancement Act to liberalize United States' sanctions on exports of agricultural products to Cuba. Following recent hurricanes, some initial food shipments were made from the United States to Cuba. However, continuing United States' restrictions limits full access to the Cuban markets.

Summary of Bill: Congress and the President of the United States are requested to end restrictions on trade of agricultural products with Cuba.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Testimony For: Many countries, including Canada, Spain, Germany and Italy, trade with and participate in business ventures in Cuba. The U.S. trade sanctions on Cuba were imposed in 1961. In 2000, Congress enacted the Trade Sanction Reform and Export Enhancement Act that allows greater export of agricultural products to Cuba but limitations to full access continue. Cuba's population is in need of food, medicine and humanitarian aid and the U.S. could be the supplier. The state of Washington's economy would benefit from being able to expand exports of agricultural products to Cuba.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Senator Kohl-Welles, prime sponsor (pro); Linda Johnson, Farm Bureau (pro); Jim Halstrom, WA State Horticultural Assn. (pro); Mike Kayser (pro); Paul Thomas, Oneonte Trading Corp (pro); Janet Cleister, WSDA (pro).