

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 1126

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Agriculture, March 25, 2003

Title: An act relating to seed testing and certification fees.

Brief Description: Allowing seed testing fees to increase in excess of the fiscal growth factor set out in chapter 43.135 RCW.

Sponsors: Representatives Schoesler and Linville.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Agriculture: 3/25/03 [DPA].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

Majority Report: Do pass as amended.

Signed by Senators Swecker, Chair; Brandland, Vice Chair; Jacobsen and Rasmussen.

Staff: Bob Lee (786-7404)

Background: Initiative 601, approved by voters in November 1993, contains a provision that requires any fee increase in excess of the fiscal growth factor to receive prior legislative approval. The fiscal growth factor is the sum of the percentage increase in inflation plus the percentage increase in the state population.

The current fees for seed inspection and certification are established by rule. The revenue from the fees collected by this program and fees for several other programs administered by the agency are deposited in an account in the agricultural local fund.

Summary of Amended Bill: The Department of Agriculture is authorized to increase fees for laboratory testing and seed certification in excess of the fiscal growth factor.

Amended Bill Compared to Original Bill: The striking amendment deletes the null and void clause that would be triggered if any of the agricultural local fund is authorized to be transferred to the general fund before July 1, 2003.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect on July 1, 2003.

Testimony For: An increase in revenue is needed to assure that seed inspections and certifications are completed in a timely manner to meet marketing opportunities.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Representative Schoesler, prime sponsor (pro); Leslie Emerick, WSDA (pro); Brad Boswell, WA North Idaho Seed Assn. (pro).