

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5696

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As Passed Senate, March 19, 2003

**Title:** An act relating to shepherd housing.

**Brief Description:** Concerning shepherd housing.

**Sponsors:** Senators Honeyford, Prentice, Mulliken, Rasmussen, Deccio, Doumit and Parlette.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Commerce & Trade: 2/21/03, 2/26/03 [DP, DNP].

Passed Senate: 3/19/03, 34-14.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE & TRADE

**Majority Report:** Do pass.

Signed by Senators Honeyford, Chair; Hewitt, Vice Chair; Franklin and Mulliken.

**Minority Report:** Do not pass.

Signed by Senator Keiser.

**Staff:** Elizabeth Mitchell (786-7430)

**Background:** The Department of Labor and Industries and the Department of Health regulate temporary farmworker housing. Current temporary farmworker housing rules include requirements for electricity and toilet, bathing and laundry facilities.

**Summary of Bill:** Shepherders are exempt from the definition of "agricultural employer" for the purposes of regulation of temporary farmworker housing for mobile range shepherders. The Department of Labor and Industries must not enforce standards exceeding minimum U.S. Department of Labor standards for shepherd housing.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

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

**Testimony For:** Shepherders choose to come to this country to do their work. Shepherders have a very mobile lifestyle during certain times of the year. They sometimes stay at one location for two or three days while sheep are grazing, then move on to a different location. They travel in specially-built wagons, which have plumbing and cooking equipment and a bed. The shepherders need these wagons to travel over rough terrain in different types of weather.

**Testimony Against:** The basic rights of workers should be protected. If this bill passes, there would be less stringent regulation of housing for shepherders. The state has more stringent requirements than the federal government, and these standards are not excessive.

**Testified:** Max Fernandez, Fernandez Ranch (pro); Steve Cant, Labor and Industries; Carol Martinez, Nelson Lozano, S. Martinez Lvst. (pro); Antonio Ginatta, Hispanic Affairs (con); Jeff Johnson, WA State Labor Council, AFL-CIO (con).