

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SSB 6073

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As Passed Senate, April 17, 2003

**Title:** An act relating to authorizing the increase of shellfish license fees to fund shellfish biotoxin testing and monitoring.

**Brief Description:** Authorizing the increase of shellfish license fees.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Hargrove, Rossi and Doumit).

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Ways & Means: 4/10/03, 4/11/03 [DPS].

Passed Senate: 4/17/03, 48-1.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

**Majority Report:** That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6073 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Rossi, Chair; Hewitt, Vice Chair; Zarelli, Vice Chair; Brown, Doumit, Fairley, Fraser, Hale, Johnson, Parlette, Regala, Roach, Sheahan, B. Sheldon and Winsley.

**Staff:** Richard Ramsey (786-7412)

**Background:** To ensure the health of consumers, the Department of Health's Environmental Health Program conducts testing and monitoring for biotoxins of shellfish from both commercial beds and beaches used by recreational shellfishers. The funding source for this program is the state general fund.

Harmful algal blooms occurring along the Washington coast may cause increased levels of domoic acid, which can trigger closure of the recreational and commercial shellfish harvest. The Olympic Region Harmful Algal Bloom (ORHAB) monitoring program is a collaboration of government, academia, business, and tribes established to study harmful algal blooms on the Washington coast. The program is based in the Olympic Natural Resources Center at the University of Washington. The objectives of the program are to understand the environmental conditions that cause blooms, and to develop models to predict and mitigate the effects of harmful algal blooms.

A personal use shellfish and seaweed license is required to dig for or possess seaweed or shellfish. The fee for the resident license is \$7. The fee for the nonresident license is \$20. The fee for a resident combination fishing license is \$36; the fee for a nonresident combination license is \$72.

**Summary of Bill:** Surcharges are added to personal use shellfish license fees to fund (1) biotoxin testing and monitoring by the Department of Health of beaches used for recreational

shellfishing and (2) monitoring by the ORHAB monitoring program of the Olympic Natural Resources Center at the University of Washington.

The surcharge increases resident and nonresident shellfish licenses by \$3, and the resident and nonresident combination fishing licenses by \$2.

Amounts collected from the surcharge are deposited in the general fund-local account managed by the Department of Health. \$150,000 of the revenues goes to the ORHAB monitoring program.

These fee increases take effect in the Department of Fish and Wildlife's license fee structure beginning July 1, 2003.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on April 10, 2003.

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

**Testimony For:** If we don't find funding for shellfish testing, there cannot be clam seasons. The Department of Health supports the shift from the state general fund to fees for biotoxin testing of shellfish.

**Testimony Against:** The state general fund reduction in the Senate-passed operating budget takes effect on July 1, 2003. If these fees take effect with the license year beginning April 1, 2004, there will be a significant funding shortfall for the Department of Health.

**Testified:** Jim Jesernig, Pacific Coast Shellfish Growers (pro); Bill White, Department of Health (pro with concerns).