

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SHB 3033

As Passed House:
February 11, 2006

Title: An act relating to animal identification.

Brief Description: Creating an advisory committee to evaluate animal identification programs.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Economic Development, Agriculture & Trade (originally sponsored by Representatives Pettigrew, Kristiansen, Grant, Kretz, Holmquist, Cox, B. Sullivan, Clements, Campbell, Haigh, Newhouse and Linville).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Economic Development, Agriculture & Trade: 1/30/06, 2/1/06 [DPS].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 2/11/06, 91-3.

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Directs the Department of Agriculture to convene an advisory committee to examine national and state animal identification programs and recommend a plan by December 1, 2006, for implementing the state's component, including funding.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AGRICULTURE & TRADE

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 22 members: Representatives Linville, Chair; Pettigrew, Vice Chair; Kristiansen, Ranking Minority Member; Appleton, Bailey, Blake, Buri, Chase, Clibborn, Dunn, Grant, Haler, Holmquist, Kilmer, Kretz, McCoy, Morrell, Newhouse, Quall, Strow, P. Sullivan and Wallace.

Staff: Meg Van Schoorl (786-7105).

Background:

In 2004, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) initiated the National Animal Identification System (NAIS), intended to be a comprehensive information system to support ongoing animal disease monitoring, surveillance, and eradication programs. When fully operational, the system is planned to be in use in all states to identify and track animals as they come into contact and commingle with animals other than those in their premise of origin. The system is intended to enable animal health officials to trace a sick animal or group of

animals back to the herd or premise that was the most likely source of infection, and to trace forward animals that might have been exposed but later moved away from the infected herd or premise. A stated long-term goal is for the NAIS to be able to identify all premises and animals that had direct contact with a foreign animal disease or domestic disease of concern within 48 hours of discovery.

Implementation of the NAIS involves both the federal and state departments of agriculture and has three phases: premise registration; animal identification; and animal movement reporting. The state Department of Agriculture (Department) began voluntary premise registration in January 2005. In the past year, 875 premises have registered. Issuance of unique individual or group lot animal identification numbers is the second phase. Nationally, a number of industry/government, species-specific workgroups have formed to consider which type of identification will work best for their particular animals. Methods under consideration include radio frequency identification tags, retinal scans, DNA, and others. The third phase will involve collection of information on animal movement from one premise to another. The program is currently voluntary at both the state and federal level, but may become mandatory at the national level in 2009 or 2010.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

The Director of the Department (Director) must convene an advisory committee (committee) whose members represent cattle industry segments that will be involved in state-level implementation of the national animal identification program. The Director is required to consult with affected industry organizations in making committee appointments, and is authorized to appoint additional members as needed. The Director must appoint one committee member who is from a federally recognized tribe and is in the cattle industry.

The advisory group will:

- evaluate the national animal identification program requirements;
- examine approaches taken by other states, with an emphasis on neighboring states and those with the largest amount of livestock trade with Washington;
- evaluate two or more demonstration projects by the Department at facilities that handle large numbers of animals;
- make a recommendation on how to implement the federal requirements in Washington, including funding amounts and sources; and
- consult with the Office of Financial Management on the funding proposal.

The Department must provide a final report to the Legislature on the committee's activities and recommendations by December 1, 2006.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available on original bill.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: With uncertainties at the federal level about the timing and requirements for the NAIS, it is important to have our state and industry on board to figure out the state-level implementation. One of the committee goals will be to identify the costs associated with implementation of the animal identification system and figure out what portions the industry and state will each bear. Having the committee look at implementation in other states will help generate ideas for our own planning. There should be tribal representation on the Committee.

Testimony Against: None.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Ed Field, Washington Cattle Feeders; Jack Field, Washington Cattlemen's Association; Ted Wishon, Lee Engelhardt, Mark Ellis, Craig Grub, and Pat Boss, Cattle Producers of Washington; Jay Gordon, Washington State Dairy Federation; and Roy Webster.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.