

SENATE BILL REPORT

SSB 5169

As Passed Senate, March 11, 2005

Title: An act relating to the carry over of funds for biotoxin testing and monitoring.

Brief Description: Authorizing unspent biotoxin testing and monitoring funds to carry over to future biennia.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Hargrove and Shin).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Ways & Means: 2/21/05, 3/1/05 [DPS].

Passed Senate: 3/11/05, 46-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5169 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Prentice, Chair; Doumit, Vice Chair; Fraser, Vice Chair; Zarelli, Ranking Minority Member; Brandland, Hewitt, Parlette, Pflug, Pridemore, Rasmussen, Regala, Roach, Rockefeller, Schoesler and Thibaudeau.

Staff: Kirstan Arestad (786-7708)

Background: To ensure the health of consumers, the Department of Health's (DOH) Environmental Health program conducts testing and monitoring of paralytic and amnesic poisons (biotoxins) in the recreational shellfish fisheries. In the event dangerous levels of toxins are detected, the DOH has authorization to close shellfish beds and beaches.

The Olympic Region Harmful Algal Bloom (ORHAB) monitoring program is a collaboration of government, academia, businesses, and tribes established to study harmful algal blooms on the Washington coast. The program is based in the Olympic Natural Resources Center and administered by the University of Washington.

The 2003 legislature authorized the increase of shellfish license fees to cover the cost of shellfish testing and algal bloom monitoring through an assessment of various surcharges. Amounts collected must be deposited in the general fund-local account managed by the DOH except \$150,000 per year which is deposited into the general fund-local account managed by the University of Washington (UW). Amounts in excess of the annual costs of the DOH recreational shellfish testing and monitoring programs shall be transferred to the state general fund.

The Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) is currently authorized by statute to collect:

- \$3.00 surcharge from the sale of resident and non-resident shellfish and seaweed licenses;

- \$2.00 surcharge on resident and non-resident adult combination licenses;
- \$2.00 surcharge on annual resident and nonresident razor clam licenses; and
- \$1.00 surcharge to for the three-day razor clam license.

Summary of Substitute Bill: This bill clarifies that the University of Washington's (UW) \$150,000 annual appropriation can carry over into ensuing biennia rather than transferred to the state general fund and authorizes the Department of Health (DOH) to carry forward its unspent biotoxin and monitoring funds. The DOH and the UW are required to provide an annual letter to the legislature on the status of expenditures.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: In the original bill, DOH was not allowed to carry forward its unspent biotoxin and monitoring funds.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: None.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

Testimony For: The carry over of unspent funds will provide a continuous funding source when federal funds are not available.

Testimony Against: None.

Who Testified: PRO: Ellen Matheny, University of Washington.

House Amendment(s): The amendment clarifies the underlying bill by removing inconsistent language.

Passed House: 92-0