

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6056

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Agriculture & Rural Economic Development, January 26, 2006

Title: An act relating to the certification of animal massage therapists.

Brief Description: Certifying animal massage therapists.

Sponsors: Senator Rasmussen.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Agriculture & Rural Economic Development: 1/26/06 [DPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6056 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Rasmussen, Chair; Shin, Vice Chair; Schoesler, Ranking Minority Member; Delvin, Jacobsen, Morton and Sheldon.

Staff: Bob Lee (786-7404)

Background: In 2001, Washington enacted a program whereby licensed massage practitioner could receive an additional endorsement on their license to also perform massage on animals. To receive this license endorsement, a person who is already licensed to perform massage on humans would be required to take an additional 100 hours of training in animal massage.

To obtain a license as a human massage practitioner, the State Board of Massage requires 500 hours of training that is to be completed over at least a six month period. Schools that offer these classes are required to receive prior approval from the Department of Health. Graduates are required to pass a written examination and a practical demonstration of massage therapy.

Additionally, licensed veterinarians and persons who work for licensed veterinarians may perform massage on animals for hire.

There is an interest in the development of an animal massage certification program that would allow persons to take training in animal massage without first having to be licensed as a human massage therapist.

Summary of Substitute Bill: Persons who wish to solely practice animal massage may obtain certification from the Department of Health by taking 300 hours of training in animal massage. Certification and renewal fees to support the program and procedural requirements will be adopted by rule. The Uniform Disciplinary Act applies to this category of certified animal massage practitioner and will be administered by the Department of Health.

Nothing in the act prohibits or restricts the practice of veterinary medicine nor the practice of animal massage by persons who have the additional endorsement under their human massage license.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The substitute bill establishes the number of hours of training that is required to obtain a certification as either a large or a small animal massage practitioner at 300 hours.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Testimony For: This bill allows persons to take classes and to practice animal massage. The course work will include a number of courses in anatomy, kinesiology, animal behavior and handling techniques.

Testimony Against: None.

Who Testified: PRO: Lola Michelin, Cheryl Gordon, and Charlie Brown, Washington Animal Massage Association.