

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 6365

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As Reported By Senate Committee On:  
Agriculture & Rural Economic Development, January 31, 2006

**Title:** An act relating to registration fees for weighing and measuring devices.

**Brief Description:** Changing the registration fees for weighing and measuring devices.

**Sponsors:** Senators Rasmussen, Schoesler, Jacobsen, Fraser and Shin; by request of Department of Agriculture.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Agriculture & Rural Economic Development: 1/19/06, 1/31/06 [DPS].

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**Majority Report:** That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6365 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

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

**Staff:** Bob Lee (786-7404)

**Background:** The Weights and Measures Program regulates the use and accuracy of all commercial weighing and measuring devices in the state except in Seattle and Spokane. These include gas pumps, grocery store scales, truck scales, home heating oil truck meters, liquid gas meters, and taximeters. The program consists of device inspections, fuel quality monitoring, price verification inspections, package inspection, and investigation of complaints. This program is administered by the Department of Agriculture.

Seattle and Spokane each have their own programs for their respective jurisdictions. Those programs include most, but not all, of the inspections conducted by the Department of Agriculture.

Device registration fees were established in 1995 as the mechanism to fund the administration of these programs. Prior to 1995, the cost was funded from the state general fund.

**Summary of Substitute Bill:** The registration fee for numerous devices and the license fees for weighers, weigh-masters, and service agents are increased (refer to bill).

**Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:** The original bill increased the device registration fees established in 1995 across the board by 150 percent. The substitute bill includes some fees not in the original bill and thus broadens the base, adjusts the fees taking into consideration the time of performing the inspection and number of years since some fees have been last adjusted, and reduces the level of the proposed increase for most categories. The fees for categories that currently are significantly above the cost of service were not increased.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Committee/Commission/Task Force Created:** No.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect on July 1, 2006.

**Testimony For:** Since the Weights and Measures Program was changed to a fee supported program in 1995, the program has not had sufficient funds to meet the goal of inspection interval of once every two years. Consumers expect a higher inspection frequency than what the current fee structure can provide.

**Testimony Against:** An across the board fee increase of 150 percent is not acceptable, especially when the state general fund is in surplus. There is support for a sizable fee increase, but fees should better reflect the cost of service. Some fees that are not being increased haven't seen an increase since 1969 and should be increased along with the ones that have been proposed.

**Who Testified:** PRO: Mary Beth Lang and Jerry Buendal, Department of Agriculture; David Foster and Craig Leicy, City of Seattle.

CON: Greg Hanon, Western States Petroleum Association; Tim Hamilton, AUTO; Jan Gee, Washington Food Industry; Jane Dale, QFC; Shane Erickson, Safeway Stores; Charlie Brown, Washington Oil Marketers Association.