

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6855

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

Title: An act relating to barley straw for water clarification.

Brief Description: Authorizing the application of barley straw to waters of the state.

Sponsors: Senators Schoesler and Rasmussen.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Agriculture & Rural Economic Development: 1/30/06, 1/31/06 [DPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6855 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: Studies have shown that barley straw can reduce the growth of algae when used in specific ways. There is interest in making barley straw available for water clarification purposes in ponds and other bodies of water.

Summary of Substitute Bill: The application of barley straw to waters of the state for purposes of water clarification does not require a state waste discharge permit if certain conditions are met. The conditions include: limiting the amount of barley straw that may be used for a given surface area of water; whole bales of densely packed straw are not to be used but that straw be loosely packed in nylon or mesh bags; that bags be placed in areas where control is desired; that bags are to be staked or anchored in place; and that bags be placed in the spring prior to algae growth, and removed before winter.

This section does not alter any permit requirements that may exist under the hydraulic project approval statutes.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The bill language was restructured.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Testimony For: Barley straw is a natural control for algae. The process needs to be simplified to make this water clarification alternative available.

Testimony Against: None.

Testimony Other: The Department of Ecology wishes to work with the committee to address its issues.

Who Testified: PRO: Senator Mark Schoesler, prime sponsor.

OTHER: Melodie Selby, Department of Ecology.