
**State Government & Tribal
Affairs Committee**

HB 1688

Brief Description: Concerning the marketing of fruits and vegetables.

Sponsors: Representatives Newhouse, Grant and Morrell.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Provides a public records exemption for certain information relating to the sale and marketing of fruits and vegetables.

Hearing Date: 2/23/07

Staff: Colleen Kerr (786-7168).

Background:

Agriculture is one of Washington's key industries. In order to protect the state's reputation as a provider of premium fruits and vegetables in the global market, the Legislature created quality standards for fruits and vegetables, with clear direction on the inspection process. Pursuant to the statute, apples, apricots, Italian prunes, peaches, sweet cherries, pears, potatoes, asparagus, and any other fruit or vegetable designated by the Washington State Department of Agriculture that is packed in Washington is subject to inspection to ensure compliance with the grade and pack standards. Inspection is conducted by the Fruit and Vegetable Inspection Division of the Department of Agriculture. This inspection makes available to the Department of Agriculture individual shipper data, including: produce shipment volume, shipment destination and variety information. Under the Public Records Act, this information is subject to disclosure.

Summary of Bill:

The Public Records Act exemption for information related to agriculture and livestock is expanded to include information that can be identified to a particular business through the statutorily required inspection of fruits and vegetables.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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