
**Agriculture & Natural Resources
Committee**

HB 2429

Brief Description: Establishing a work group to study the roadside application of pesticides.

Sponsors: Representatives Campbell, Chase, Morrell, Hunter, Appleton, Hudgins, Rolfes and Upthegrove.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the Department of Health to form a work group to evaluate alternatives to the use of roadside pesticides.

Hearing Date: 1/24/08

Staff: Colleen Kerr (786-7168).

Background:

Washington statutorily mandates noxious weed control in and around agricultural areas, including along roadways, to protect the state's economic and ecological interests. The Department of Transportation (WSDOT) maintains the state's Roadside Vegetation Management Program, which both cares for and controls vegetation growth on the roadside. The WSDOT uses roadside pesticides to maintain a vegetation free strip on the side of the road where necessary and to selectively control and eliminate undesirable plants.

Summary of Bill:

The Department of Health (DOH) must convene a work group to study policies, strategies, and alternatives to the use of roadside pesticides and make recommendations to the Legislature on practical, cost-effective opportunities to reduce or eliminate the use of roadside pesticides based on such findings.

The workgroup must include representatives from the DOH, the Pesticide Incident Reporting and Tracking Review Panel, the State Noxious Weed Board, WSDOT, the Department of Ecology,

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and the Department of Agriculture, local governments, industry, nongovernmental organizations, and other stakeholders as deemed appropriate by the DOH.

The workgroup shall take the following into consideration: the environmental events of roadside pesticides on people; existing data and research; monitoring data showing contamination from roadside pesticide use on soil, groundwater, and water bodies; other state, regional, municipal, or international practices; state laws, rules, fees, certification programs, incentives, and policies that may reduce or eliminate the use of roadside pesticides; cost comparisons on alternatives to roadside pesticide; and potential financial incentives and funding sources.

The workgroup will report to the Legislature by December 1, 2008. Recommendations must include practical and cost-effective policies, strategies, and alternatives to reduce or eliminate the use of roadside pesticides, and may include statutory or regulatory changes, incentives, and other approaches.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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