
**Agriculture & Natural Resources
Committee**

HB 2617

Brief Description: Addressing membership on the apple commission.

Sponsors: Representatives Blake, Kenney, Upthegrove and Chase; by request of Washington Apple Commission.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Makes changes regarding the composition of the Washington Apple Commission.

Hearing Date: 1/24/08

Staff: Colleen Kerr (786-7168).

Background:

The Washington State Apple Advertising Commission (the Commission) was created by an act of the Washington State Legislature in 1937 at the request of the apple industry. The Commission has a fourteen-member board of directors, 9 of whom are elected by the apple growers in specified districts and 4 of whom are elected by the apple shippers and marketers in specified districts. One member is the Director of Agriculture. Each Commissioner is elected for a 3-year term.

The primary purpose of the Commission is advertising, promotion, education and market development for the Washington fresh apple crop. Currently, no promotions are being implemented in the US, but are implemented in more than 30 countries overseas where Washington apples are sold.

Under statutory authority, the Commission collects a mandatory assessment levied against all fresh apple shipments to generate revenue for self-funding purposes. The assessment rate is established by a referendum of commercial apple growers in the state, and remains at the same level every year until changed by growers. Since 1937, growers have increased the assessment thirteen times from its original 1 cent per box to as high as 40 cents per 42-lb box. No revenues are received from apples diverted to apple processors for juice or sauce.

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.

Summary of Bill:

Vacancies on the Commission are filled by appointment by the Director from a list of candidates proposed by the Commission. When only one candidate is proposed, the Director has the discretion to appoint or reject the candidate. When a list is proposed, the Director may select or reject any candidate or reject all candidates.

The requirement that the annual meeting of apple growers be held by February 15 each year is removed.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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