

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2893

As Reported by House Committee On:
Agriculture & Natural Resources

Title: An act relating to the composition of the forest practices board.

Brief Description: Modifying the composition of the forest practices board.

Sponsors: Representatives Van DeWege, Kessler, Moeller, Sells, Hunt, Takko, McCoy, Liias, Conway, Haigh, Blake, Ormsby, Loomis, O'Brien, Eickmeyer, Hasegawa, Green, Pearson and Nelson.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Agriculture & Natural Resources: 1/31/08, 2/5/08 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Authorizes a representative of a timber products union to sit as a member on the Forest Practices Board of Washington.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 13 members: Representatives Blake, Chair; Van De Wege, Vice Chair; Kretz, Ranking Minority Member; Warnick, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Eickmeyer, Grant, Kristiansen, Lantz, Loomis, McCoy, Nelson, Newhouse and Orcutt.

Staff: Jaclyn Ford (786-7339).

Background:

The Forest Practices Board of Washington was created in order to integrate the laws, rules, and programs governing forest practices and hydraulic projects. Membership consists of the directors of the Departments of Agriculture, Ecology, Fish and Wildlife, and Community, Trade and Economic Development, and the Commissioner of Public Lands. In addition, an elected member of a county legislative authority and six members of the general public (one

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of them being an independent logging contractor, one owning less than 500 acres of forest land) are appointed by the Governor. Each member is appointed for a term of four years.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

The Governor will appoint a representative of the timber products union to the Forest Practices Board from a list of three names submitted by a timber labor coalition affiliated with a statewide labor organization representing a majority of the timber products unions in Washington.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The substitute bill specifies that the new representative to the Forest Practices Board will be from a timber products union. The Governor will be given a list of three names, submitted by a timber labor coalition affiliated with a statewide labor organization, representing a majority of the timber products unions in Washington. The substitute bill also changes the required representation on the Forest Practices Board for a person who owns less than 500 acres to a person who actively manages his or her land and satisfies the existing definition of a "small forest landowner."

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) Opportunities for change on the Forest Practices Board are limited. Most of the six seats are appointed by tradition. Labor can add significantly to the decisions of the Forest Practices Board. Each of the six traditional seats should not be specified. Unions have a long history of advocacy for forest practices, as well as participating in decision-making organizations. Many jobs are created by the forest industry, and labor should therefore be on the Forest Practices Board.

(Opposed) The Forest Practices Board is delicately balanced. If the Legislature starts naming the traditional seats, there is concern that it will become a "me too" situation. The industry will have influence on the composition of the Forest Practices Board; therefore the labor representative should be an independent spot on the Forest Practices Board.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Representative Van De Wege, prime sponsor; Doug Sutherland, Commissioner of Public Lands; and Debora Munguia, Washington Forest Protection Association.

(Opposed) Heath Packard, Audubon Society; and Jack Turner.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: Sean O'Sullivan, Association of Western Pulp and Paper Workers Local 644.