

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5056

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Agriculture & Rural Economic Development, January 16, 2007

Title: An act relating to the small farm direct marketing assistance program.

Brief Description: Continuing the small farm direct marketing assistance program.

Sponsors: Senators Rasmussen, Schoesler, Shin, Berkey, Hatfield, Jacobsen, Haugen, Kline and Sheldon; by request of Department of Agriculture.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Agriculture & Rural Economic Development: 1/11/07, 1/16/07 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Rasmussen, Chair; Hatfield, Vice Chair; Schoesler, Ranking Minority Member; Morton and Shin.

Staff: Sam Thompson (786-7413)

Background: In 2001, the Legislature established the small farm and direct marketing program within the state Department of Agriculture. The program assists small farms, defined as having less than \$250,000 gross annual sales with labor and management provided by the farmer or farm family that owns or leases the farm, in direct marketing of agricultural products. Assistance has included grants awarded to local direct marketing projects, including farmers markets. The program expires July 1, 2007.

Summary of Bill: The July 1, 2007, expiration date for the state small farm and direct marketing program is deleted, thus extending the program indefinitely.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: This important program, which assists small farms in accessing markets, should be continued.

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.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Mary Beth Lang and Fred Berman, Washington State Department of Agriculture.