

FINAL BILL REPORT

ESB 5204

C 71 L 07

Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Enforcing animal health laws.

Sponsors: Senators Rasmussen, Schoesler, Shin, Hatfield, Jacobsen and Morton; by request of Department of Agriculture.

Senate Committee on Agriculture & Rural Economic Development

House Committee on Agriculture & Natural Resources

House Committee on Appropriations

Background: The Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) Animal Health Program is charged with protecting animals and the public from communicable animal diseases. Program officials monitor movement of animals across state lines by reviewing health certificates, which are required for most animals entering the state, and by issuing or denying requested permits. Officials also set requirements for reporting and controlling diseases and conduct tests and inspections to detect diseases.

The program is responsible for emergency management planning for tracing and controlling diseases. Program officials cooperate with the U.S. Department of Agriculture in a national program designed to identify where affected animals have been within 48 hours of confirmation of a disease outbreak or other incident.

It is suggested that WSDA's animal health enforcement and regulatory authority should be strengthened.

Summary: WSDA is authorized to stop vehicles transporting animals on public roads to check for required animal health documents and to impose a civil infraction upon persons not carrying required documents. WSDA officers may inspect vehicles at posted inspection points and, if they have reasonable cause to suspect a violation, at other places.

A person violating animal health laws or rules is subject to a civil penalty of up to \$1,000 per violation. Revenue must be deposited into the state General Fund.

Persons may bring livestock into the state without first getting animal health documents if the livestock are destined for immediate slaughter at a federally inspected facility. Animals imported into the state for slaughter must be slaughtered or delivered to a slaughterhouse within three days after entry, rather than seven days.

It is unlawful to intentionally falsely apply, alter, or remove an official animal health or identification tag, mark, or other device.

WSDA hold orders requiring animals to be kept separate from other animals because of concerns regarding disease, other jeopardy to animals, or improper documents are in effect for 14 days, rather than seven days.

Livestock dealers must carry animal identification and health documents pursuant to rules adopted by WSDA.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	48	0
House	97	0

Effective: July 22, 2007