
Commerce & Labor Committee

HB 2241

Brief Description: Protecting the long-term viability of Washington's agricultural economy.

Sponsors: Representatives Kenney, Conway, Chase, Morrell and Wood.

Brief Summary of Bill

- States legislative intent to develop strategies to help employers obtain a legal and stable workforce, and to ensure that farm workers have fair and safe housing and working conditions.

Hearing Date: 2/20/09

Staff: Jill Reinmuth (786-7134)

Background:

According to the state Department of Agriculture, cash receipts at the farm level were \$8.4 billion and the food processing industry grossed \$9.1 billion in 2007. The agriculture and food industries employed 160,000 workers. More than \$9.3 billion in agricultural and food products were exported through the state's ports.

Summary of Bill:

The Legislature finds that agriculture is a cornerstone of Washington's economy, and that agriculture faces significant challenges. The Legislature intends:

- to develop strategies to help employers obtain a legal and stable workforce, and to ensure that farm workers have fair and safe housing and working conditions;
- to work closely with representatives of both farmers and farm workers in developing these strategies; and
- that these strategies be designed to protect the agricultural economy's long-term viability.

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.

Rules Authority: The bill does not address the rule-making powers of an agency.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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