

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6341

As of January 20, 2010

Title: An act relating to transferring emergency food assistance programs to the department of agriculture.

Brief Description: Transferring emergency food assistance programs to the department of agriculture.

Sponsors: Senators Hatfield, Haugen, Schoesler, Prentice, Shin and Fairley.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Agriculture & Rural Economic Development: 1/21/10.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Staff: Bob Lee (786-7404)

Background: In 1986 the Emergency Food Assistance Program (EFAP) that provides support to food banks was instituted in the Department of Commerce (DOC). A tribal voucher program was added in 1991. The program utilizes 28 contractors who serve 340 food banks and distribution centers, and 32 tribes provide vouchers or food bank services. Currently, the program received an appropriation of \$10 million in state funds for the current biennium.

The Department of General Administration (GA) has administered federal food programs provided from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). This program started as the butter and cheese program in 1981, and was originally referred to as the Temporary Emergency Food Assistance Program. The program has changed over the years and is now known as The Emergency Food Assistance Program (EFAP). This federal program has a requirement for state matching funds. This program serves 420 food providers including food banks, shelters and meal providers. In 2009 EFAP provided 14.6 million pounds of USDA provided food.

Additionally, GA administers a second federal program, the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP). Washington State was approved for CSFP in 2001.

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: EFAP in DOC is transferred to the Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA). Additionally, TEFAP in GA is transferred to the USDA.

The director of the WSDA is authorized to exercise powers and duties prescribed by law with respect to the administration of emergency food assistance programs that are assigned to the department. Statutory authority for DOC to coordinate and provide emergency food assistance to distribution centers and needy individuals is deleted.

The transfers must take effect on a date that is mutually agreed to by the directors of the involved agencies, but no later than January 1, 2011. The transfer includes records, appropriations, employees, rules, and existing contracts and obligations.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 14, 2010.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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