

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6520

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Agriculture & Rural Economic Development, January 28, 2010

Title: An act relating to providing a one-year extension for completion of recommendations under RCW 36.70A.5601 conducted by the William D. Ruckelshaus Center

Brief Description: Extending time to complete recommendations under RCW 36.70A.5601 conducted by the William D. Ruckelshaus Center.

Sponsors: Senators Hatfield, Parlette, Hobbs, Ranker, Pridemore and Shin.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Agriculture & Rural Economic Development: 1/25/10, 1/28/10 [DPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6520 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Hatfield, Chair; Ranker, Vice Chair; Schoesler, Ranking Minority Member; Becker, Haugen, Jacobsen, Morton and Shin.

Staff: Bob Lee (786-7404)

Background: In 2007 the Legislature placed a moratorium on the ability of cities and counties to amend or adopt critical area ordinances affecting agricultural lands. The moratorium was set to continue through July 1, 2010.

During this moratorium, The William D. Ruckelshaus Center was assigned to conduct a two-phase work plan. The first phase was to conduct fact finding. The second phase was to facilitate discussions between stakeholders to identify policy and financial options or opportunities to address the issues and desired outcomes identified by the stakeholders during the first phase.

The Ruckelshaus Center was instructed to work to achieve agreement among participating stakeholders that could be proposed during the 2010 Legislative Session. Once the moratorium expires, counties and cities were to review, and if necessary, revise critical area

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.

ordinances as they specifically apply to agricultural activities by December 1, 2011. The final report of the findings and legislative recommendations to the Governor and to the legislature was scheduled for September 1, 2009.

Progress reports have been provided periodically to a number of legislative committees.

Summary of Bill (Recommended Substitute): The moratorium is extended one year to July 1, 2011. The Ruckelshaus Center is to work to achieve agreement among participating stakeholders that can be proposed during the 2011 Legislative Session. The deadline by which counties and cities are to review, and if necessary, revise critical area ordinances as they specifically apply to agricultural activities is extended one year to December 1, 2012. The deadline for submission of the final report is extended one year to September 1, 2010.

If specific funding is not provided for continuation of the work of the Ruckelshaus Center, the extension for the work by the Ruckelshaus Center is null and void. However, the moratorium on counties and cities amending or adopting critical area ordinances affecting agricultural lands is extended whether or not additional funding is provided.

EFFECT OF CHANGES MADE BY AGRICULTURE & RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (Recommended Substitute): An error in a codification reference was corrected.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested January 18, 2010.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Original Bill: PRO: The Ruckelshaus Center has brought groups together that have dramatically different viewpoints on a highly controversial topic. The groups are making good progress but have been unable to reach final consensus. If the tribes drop out of the process, there are other participants that share common environmental goals with the tribes to make it worthwhile to continue.

CON: The process has reached a stalemate and it appears unlikely that an extension will resolve the issue.

OTHER: The bill was introduced as a result of the Environmental Caucus and the Agricultural Caucus request.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Dan Wood, Farm Bureau; Mo McBroom, Washington Environmental Council; Jack Field, Washington Cattlemen's Association.

CON: Jim Weber, Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission.

OTHER: Bill Ruckelshaus, Ruckelshaus Center; Eric Johnson, WA Assn of Counties.