

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 5072

As Reported by House Committee On:
Agriculture & Natural Resources

Title: An act relating to the authority of the department of agriculture to accept and expend gifts.

Brief Description: Authorizing the department of agriculture to accept and expend gifts.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Agriculture & Rural Economic Development (originally sponsored by Senators Hatfield, Shin and Haugen; by request of Department of Agriculture).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Agriculture & Natural Resources: 3/8/11, 3/15/11, 3/16/11 [DPA].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill
(As Amended by House)

- Authorizes the Washington State Department of Agriculture to accept, expend, and retain gifts, grants, bequests, or other contributions.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES

Majority Report: Do pass as amended. Signed by 13 members: Representatives Blake, Chair; Stanford, Vice Chair; Chandler, Ranking Minority Member; Wilcox, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Buys, Dunshee, Hinkle, Kretz, Lytton, Orcutt, Pettigrew, Rolfes and Van De Wege.

Staff: Jason Callahan (786-7117).

Background:

The Washington State Department of Agriculture.

The Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) oversees, manages, regulates, and supports programs that relate to food safety and the agriculture industry. The scope of the WSDA includes animal services, commodity inspections, consumer services, pesticide management, plant services, food assistance programs, and the marketing of Washington

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agricultural products. The WSDA is authorized to collect fees and assessments. The agency is not specifically authorized to accept gifts, bequests, or other voluntary contributions.

Summary of Amended Bill:

The WSDA is authorized to accept, expend, and retain gifts, grants, bequests, or other contributions. Accepted contributions may be from public or private sources and must be used to carry out the purposes and programs of the WSDA.

Amended Bill Compared to Substitute Bill:

The amended bill removes a provision that would allow surplus campaign funds to be provided to the food security program at the WSDA.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) The WSDA was recently contacted by an attorney representing a client who was interested in making a bequest to the WSDA; however, the WSDA does not have the authority to accept gifts. The authority to accept a gift provided in the bill is similar to the authority enjoyed by other state agencies.

The WSDA has recently had food bank programs moved under its purview, so the bill will allow donations to help food banks provide the sort of healthy food that requires refrigeration and modern food handling equipment. Surplus campaign funds may already be used to help reduce the state's budget deficit; allowing these funds to be used for food bank programs is a logical expansion.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Mike Moran, Second Harvest; and Tom Davis, Washington State Department of Agriculture.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.