

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SB 5981

As Reported by House Committee On:
General Government Appropriations & Oversight

Title: An act relating to seed dealer license fees.

Brief Description: Changing seed dealer license fees.

Sponsors: Senators Schoesler, Hatfield and Honeyford.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

General Government Appropriations & Oversight: 2/22/12 [DP].

<p>Brief Summary of Bill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Increases the seed dealer license fee.
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HOUSE COMMITTEE ON GENERAL GOVERNMENT APPROPRIATIONS & OVERSIGHT

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 12 members: Representatives Hudgins, Chair; Miloscia, Vice Chair; Moscoso, Vice Chair; McCune, Ranking Minority Member; Taylor, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Ahern, Blake, Fitzgibbon, Ladenburg, Pedersen, Van De Wege and Wilcox.

Staff: Michael Bennion (786-7118).

Background:

Washington State's Department of Agriculture (WSDA) administers the Seed Inspection Program, established to provide uniformity and consistency in the packaging of agricultural, vegetable, and flower seeds so as to facilitate the interstate movement of seed, to protect consumers, and to provide a dispute-resolution process. Specific activities include field inspection, seed testing and analyses, phytosanitary services, seed law enforcement, other certification services, and licensing seed dealers.

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.

The WSDA field inspection staff inspect over 54,000 acres of alfalfa, beans, clover, corn, flax, turf, forage and native grasses, peas, rapeseed, woody plants and forbs, and numerous other small seeded vegetable crops. Inspections are conducted for genetic purity, pests, disease, weed contamination, and confirmation of truthful and lawful labeling of the marketed seed.

The program is partially funded through fees charged to the industry and deposited into the Agricultural Local Account. Current inspection fees vary according to type and a seed dealer license is set at \$25 per applicant.

Summary of Bill:

The seed dealer license fee is increased from \$25 to \$125 per license.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: 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 people that grow the seeds have had regular increases to support the cost of doing business within the WSDA. The license fee for the seed dealer, who is an integral part of the system, has not increased since 1979. So to slow down the rate of growth in fees on one segment of the program, the fees were raised on the other segment. This benefits the consumer to make sure the program is adequately funded. Those most impacted would be the bigger box stores, and approximately 100 smaller to medium-size businesses would also be impacted. However, it does not apply to smaller hardware stores where seeds are sold in packages less than eight ounces.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Senator Schoesler, prime sponsor; and Mark Streuli, Washington State Department of Agriculture.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.