

SENATE BILL REPORT

SSB 5072

As Passed Senate, March 1, 2011

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 & Rural Economic Development: 1/20/11, 1/24/11 [DPS].
Passed Senate: 3/01/11, 48-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5072 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Hatfield, Chair; Shin, Vice Chair; Becker, Haugen, Hobbs, Honeyford and Schoesler.

Staff: Bob Lee (786-7404)

Background: The authority to accept and expend gifts, grants, and other contributions from public and private sources has been provided to some state agencies, but has not been granted to the Department of Agriculture.

Current law allows surplus funds of a candidate, or a political committee supporting or opposing a candidate, to be disposed of by transferring the funds to specifically authorized uses.

Summary of Substitute Bill: The Director of the Department of Agriculture may accept, expend, and retain gifts, grants, bequests, or other contributions from public or private sources to carry out the purposes and programs of the department.

Surplus funds of candidates or political committees supporting candidates may also be transferred to the Department of Agriculture's food distribution program for distribution to food banks.

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.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: None.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Original Bill: PRO: When inquiry was made to Washington State Department of Agriculture from an estate wanting to make a contribution to the farm-to-school program, it was determined that the agency did not have the authority to receive gifts to support its programs. With the emergency food assistance programs that support food banks having been consolidated into a single agency, there may be increased interest in providing donations to this program. There is interest in allowing unused political campaign funds to be donated to the food assistance programs that serve local food banks.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Tom Davis, Department of Agriculture; Mike Moran, 2nd Harvest.