

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5759

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As of February 21, 2011

**Title:** An act relating to animal disease traceability.

**Brief Description:** Regarding animal disease traceability.

**Sponsors:** Senators Shin, Becker and Conway.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Agriculture & Rural Economic Development: 2/15/11.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**Staff:** Bob Lee (786-7404)

**Background:** On January 24, 2011, the Department of Agriculture provided an in-depth report on the status and challenges of tracing livestock diseases and how the system can be modernized. It reported that over 90,000 paper documents are filed with the Animal Services Division each year. When a livestock disease incident occurs, the department has to search through their file cabinets and examine brand certificates, certificates of veterinary inspection, import permits, vaccination records, test records, tag sales, and other information to find out where the diseased animal came from and with what other animals it came in contact. This manual search process requires a significant amount of time, and the need for information on contagious diseases require a faster response.

The livestock industry has been examining with the agency what is needed to modernize the system that allows electronic filing and search capabilities. Legislation is sought that provides the department authority to implement a program once an industry consensus is reached on the system and associated costs.

**Summary of Bill:** Authority is provided for the department to recover costs associated with purchasing, printing, and distributing official individual livestock identification devices or methods.

The department may adopt rules for providing services and support related to provision of regulatory forms and supplies distributed by the department such as tags and radio frequency identification devices. In addition to the amount collected for the actual cost of the device, the department is authorized to establish by rule an additional fee to fund the system.

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*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.*

Any funds collected are to be placed in an account in the agricultural local fund to carry out the animal health and livestock identification programs of the department.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

[OFM requested ten-year cost projection pursuant to I-960.]

**Committee/Commission/Task Force Created:** None.

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

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:** PRO: A goal is to be able to keep markets open and better tracking of animal diseases will help. In favor of traceability but have a concern that the industry has to have a meeting of the minds and with the Director of Agriculture. Paying a little more is like an insurance policy that cattle shipped are clean from disease. We should learn from the experience of South Korea who is depopulating much of their livestock herd because of the fast moving Foot and Mouth Disease epidemic. Supports the bill's concepts and agrees that additional work needs to be done. Would like a timeline and perhaps an advisory committee to shape and scope how the program is configured, and determine how costs are distributed to different sectors within the industry.

CON: Cattle Producers of Washington (CPOW) does not support the bill but supports the goals. It doesn't contain enough detail as to what would be charged and who would be charged. There is not a consensus at this time.

OTHER: Cattle are moving farther and faster than ever. This exposes a greater threat that animal diseases can be rapidly dispersed and are not able to be contained to a small area as in the past. The system to track these animals needs to be updated to move faster also. There are no resources to improve the current paper system. The involved industry groups still need to come together on a method of funding to improve the system. If and after agreement is reached, the bill provides the ability to move forward.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Senator Shin, prime sponsor; Ed Field, Washington Cattle Feeders Assn.; Vic Stokes, Rick Nelson, Jack Field, Washington Cattlemen's Assn; Jay Gordon, Washington State Dairy Federation.

CON: Heather Hansen, CPOW.

OTHER: Dr. Leonard Eldridge, State Veterinarian, WSDA.