

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2405

As Passed House:
February 17, 2014

Title: An act relating to hemp as a component of commercial animal feed.

Brief Description: Regarding hemp as a component of commercial animal feed.

Sponsors: Representatives Buys, Blake, Condotta, Warnick and Tharinger.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Agriculture & Natural Resources: 1/21/14, 1/28/14 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 2/17/14, 97-0.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the Washington State Department of Agriculture to evaluate whether hemp and hemp products should be allowed as a component of animal feed.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 13 members: Representatives Blake, Chair; Lytton, Vice Chair; Buys, Ranking Minority Member; MacEwen, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Dunshee, Haigh, Hurst, Kretz, Orcutt, Pettigrew, Schmick, Van De Wege and Warnick.

Staff: Jason Callahan (786-7117).

Background:

A commercial feed license is required of every person who manufactures, distributes, or is listed as a guarantor of a commercial animal feed. The license is issued by the Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA). Commercial animal feed must be packaged with a label stating the contents of the feed, the common names of ingredients, the net weight, and a guaranteed analysis of the contents.

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.

Commercial animal feeds may not be sold if they include ingredients that are not recognized as acceptable ingredients or if they include ingredients that are seen as an alteration of the feed. The WSDA is responsible for deciding which ingredients are acceptable. In doing so, they are required to consider federal regulations and the official definitions and terms adopted for commercial feed by the Association of American Feed Control Officials (AAFCO). The AAFCO is a voluntary membership association of local, state, and federal agencies that regulate the sale and distribution of animal feeds. The AAFCO is not a regulatory agency in and of itself, but an organization composed of regulatory agencies from across the country. To be eligible for sale in Washington, most feed ingredients must meet definitions established by the AAFCO.

Hemp is currently not an allowable component of animal feed in Washington and is not defined as a feed ingredient by the AAFCO.

Summary of Bill:

The WSDA is required to evaluate whether hemp and hemp products should be allowed as a component of animal feed. In that process, the WSDA may focus its efforts as appropriate and limit its scope to particular classes of animals where current research suggests that hemp has the most benefit on animal health, animal welfare, the resulting animal product, or the overall physical environment.

The WSDA must take the appropriate administrative actions to allow hemp as a component of commercial feed if it is determined in the evaluation that the addition of hemp is appropriate. If the WSDA finds that hemp is not an appropriate addition to the list of allowable feed ingredients, then a report must be issued to the Legislature explaining the WSDA's findings.

The WSDA must complete the evaluation by June 30, 2017. If that date cannot be satisfied, the WSDA must recommend legislation to request an extension of the date.

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) State law allows humans to consume hemp seeds, yet there is a prohibition against feeding hemp to animals. Research suggests that hemp can have many health benefits when it is fed to animals, and this bill is a good first step towards allowing access in Washington. The study would allow an identification of barriers to allowing hemp in commercial feed and target where using hemp as a food supplement could be the most beneficial and appropriate. The ultimate outcome of allowing hemp in animal feed would still have to be approved by the United States Food and Drug Administration.

(Opposed) None.

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

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.