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**HOUSE BILL 1710**

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**State of Washington 64th Legislature 2015 Regular Session**

**By** Representatives Tarleton, Walkinshaw, McBride, Ortiz-Self, Sawyer, Peterson, Gregerson, and Hudgins

AN ACT Relating to fostering economic growth in Washington by supporting the in-state production, processing, and distribution of food supply; creating new sections; making appropriations; and providing an expiration date.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) The legislature recognizes the important role of food production, processing, and distribution within the state in promoting food security, community resilience, and economic opportunity in Washington. Washington residents spend more than forty-five billion dollars per year on food, but the vast majority of this money is spent on food that is grown and processed outside of the state. Keeping food dollars in Washington through improvements in local food production, processing, and distribution could result in widespread benefits, including increased employment and economic growth throughout the farm and food economies. The legislature further finds that supporting the local food industry is critical to building and sustaining a diverse and resilient economy in Washington.

(2) It is the intent of the legislature to engage in a collaborative process with local farmers, food processors, and food distributors to evaluate changes in state and local policies and the funding that is needed to foster resilience and growth in the local food sector. The legislature intends to develop and implement an economic development strategy to promote a more dependable, healthy local food supply and expand economic opportunities for Washington food producers, processors, and distributors. The legislature intends the economic benefits of these efforts to support and be a part of a greater food supply network linking small local farms, schools, farmers markets, food banks, shelters, and many other areas touched by issues surrounding fresh food access.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) The Washington State University center for sustaining agriculture and natural resources shall study the economic development of the local food system in Washington.

(2)(a) The study shall identify a ten-year goal for expansion of the state's food production, processing, and distribution capacity by:

(i) Evaluating the state's capacity to produce a variety of food products given the state's environment and climate;

(ii) Assessing a potential market demand for an increased local food supply, through surveys of processors, distributors, and buyers;

(iii) Identifying infrastructure needs to support the local food industry, including processing capacity and transportation networks;

(iv) Assessing the institutional capacity of state agencies and organizations to foster economic growth in the food sector;

(v) Evaluating changes in state planning, permitting, environmental regulation, and financing to enhance food production, processing, and distribution; and

(vi) Identifying legislative actions needed to implement food system improvements.

(b) The recommendations of the study must include short and long-term action plans for the legislature to support and sustain the local food sector in Washington. The recommendations of the study may include specific legislative approaches, such as changes in state law, and nonlegislative approaches, such as action plans for state agencies and local governments.

(3) Washington State University must form an advisory committee to provide technical information, advice, and assistance in completing the study. The advisory committee must include representatives of farm organizations, food processors, food distributors, restaurateurs, food service directors, and local food advocacy organizations.

(4) Washington State University must submit to the governor and the appropriate committees of the legislature a final study report with findings and recommendations by November 30, 2015, and in compliance with RCW 43.01.036.

(5) This section expires December 31, 2016.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The sum of seventy-five thousand dollars, or as much thereof as may be necessary, is appropriated for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2016, from the general fund to Washington State University for the purposes of section 2 of this act, provided that a minimum of seventy-five thousand dollars is matched in other sources of funding to complete the study.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  If specific funding for the purposes of section 2 of this act, referencing section 2 of this act by bill or chapter number and section number, is not provided by June 30, 2015, in the omnibus appropriations act, section 2 of this act is null and void.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The sum of one million dollars, or as much thereof as may be necessary, is appropriated for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2016, from the general fund to the department of agriculture for the purposes of revitalizing the department of agriculture's farm-to-school program, RCW 15.64.060, the small farm direct marketing assistance program, RCW 15.64.050, and this act.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  If any provision of this act or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the act or the application of the provision to other persons or circumstances is not affected.

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