

HOUSE BILL REPORT

E2SHB 1562

As Reported by House Committee On: Appropriations

Title: An act relating to continuing the work of the Washington food policy forum.

Brief Description: Continuing the work of the Washington food policy forum.

Sponsors: House Committee on Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives Gregerson, Stonier, Orwall, Senn, Slatter, Peterson, Lovick, Farrell, Santos, Ryu, McBride, Ortiz-Self, Hudgins, Pollet, Riccelli, Macri, Pike, Stanford, Doglio, Fitzgibbon, Bergquist, Tharinger, Sawyer, Ormsby, Dolan, Cody and Fey).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Agriculture & Natural Resources: 2/2/17, 2/16/17 [DPS];

Appropriations: 2/23/17, 2/24/17 [DP2S(w/o sub AGNR)], 1/29/18, 2/6/18 [DP3S].

Brief Summary of Third Substitute Bill

- Establishes a food policy forum as a public-private partnership to promote a variety of goals related to Washington's food system.
- Directs the food policy forum to submit recommendations to the Legislature no later than October 29, 2019.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Majority Report: The third substitute bill be substituted therefor and the third substitute bill do pass. Signed by 24 members: Representatives Ormsby, Chair; Robinson, Vice Chair; Stokesbary, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Bergquist, Caldier, Cody, Fitzgibbon, Haler, Hansen, Harris, Hudgins, Jinkins, Kagi, Lytton, Manweller, Pettigrew, Pollet, Sawyer, Senn, Springer, Stanford, Sullivan, Tharinger and Wilcox.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Chandler, Ranking Minority Member; MacEwen, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Buys, Condotta, Graves, Schmick, Taylor, Vick and Volz.

Staff: Dan Jones (786-7118).

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.

Background:

The Washington Food Policy Forum.

The Washington State Conservation Commission (Commission) convened a Food Policy Forum (Forum) in response to direction and funding in the 2016 Supplemental Operating Budget. The Forum followed a previous food system roundtable established by Executive Order Number 10-02.

The Forum is composed of members appointed by the Director of the Commission, as well as four members from the Legislature.

The Commission must report the Forum's recommendations to the Legislature by October 31, 2017.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

The Washington Food Policy Forum (Forum) is established as a public-private partnership and must develop recommendations to promote the following food system goals:

- to increase direct marketing sales and consumption of Washington-grown food;
- to expand and promote programs that bring healthy Washington-grown foods to Washington residents;
- to examine ways to encourage retention of an adequate number of farmers for small scale farms; and
- to reduce food insecurity and hunger in the state.

The Forum's recommendations must consider, at a minimum, how the following can help achieve the goals of the forum:

- increased collaboration between different levels of government;
- innovative public-private partnerships;
- improvements to state and federal laws relevant to the small acreage farming interactions with the food system and food security in the state;
- improvements in state or federal program implementation relevant to the small acreage farming interactions with the food system and food security in the state;
- identification of additional public and private investments needed to accomplish the recommendations; and
- defining and describing the variety of agriculture in the state utilizing farm acreage, crop type, and defining what the term "local" means in the context of food production and distribution.

The Director of the Washington State Conservation Commission (Commission) and the Director of the Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) share equally the responsibility for appointing the members of the Forum, with a goal of ensuring a diversity of knowledge, experience, and perspectives. The directors must agree on all appointments. Four members of the Legislature may also serve on the Forum, one from each of the two largest caucuses in the House of Representatives and the Senate.

The members of the Forum will not receive compensation, but may be reimbursed for their travel expenses.

The Commission and the WSDA must provide staff for the Forum. The Commission and the WSDA are also responsible for transmitting the Forum's recommendations to the Legislature. The Forum's recommendations must be submitted to the Legislature by October 31, 2018.

Third Substitute Bill Compared to Engrossed Second Substitute Bill:

The third substitute bill pushes back the three dates in the bill by one year. Specifically, the recommendations of the Food Policy Forum (Forum) are due to the Legislature by October 29, 2019 (rather than 2018), the Forum expires July 1, 2020 (rather than 2019), and the act is null and void if funding is not provided in the operating budget by June 30, 2018 (rather than 2017).

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date of Third Substitute Bill: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed. However, the bill is null and void unless funded in the budget.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) The Food Policy Forum (Forum) has been meeting with the support of a 2017-19 budget proviso, but the additional detail contained in the bill is needed to guide the Forum. The Washington State Conservation Commission has used electronic meetings to cut down on costs and would continue to do so. The bill should call out the existence of food deserts. The work of the Forum not only helps people in areas where finding healthy food is a challenge, but it also helps farmers by opening up additional local markets.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Josh Giuntoli, Washington State Conservation Commission; Carolyn Logue, Washington Food Industry; and Tom Davis, Washington Farm Bureau.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.