

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5750

As of February 15, 2017

Title: An act relating to livestock inspection.

Brief Description: Concerning livestock inspection.

Sponsors: Senators Warnick and Chase; by request of Department of Agriculture.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Agriculture, Water, Trade & Economic Development: 2/14/17.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Makes changes to the livestock inspection fees charged by the Washington State Department of Agriculture.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, WATER, TRADE & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Staff: Karen Epps (786-7424)

Background: The Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) Animal Health Program is charged with protecting animals and the public from communicable animal diseases. Program officials monitor movement of animals across state lines, set requirements for reporting and controlling diseases, and conduct testing and investigations. Cattle must be inspected when ownership is transferred. WSDA officials perform inspections when livestock are consigned to public livestock markets for sale.

WSDA may enter animal premises at reasonable times to conduct tests, examinations, or inspections for animal diseases when there is reasonable cause to investigate disease. Interference is illegal. If it is denied access, or an animal owner fails to comply with an agency order, WSDA may apply to a court for a warrant authorizing access.

WSDA may charge a fee of \$5 for issuing an inspection certificate or a time and mileage fee of \$17 for inspecting livestock. If in any one sale day the total fees collected for inspection do not exceed \$100 then the licensee must pay \$100 for the inspection services. The fee for

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inspection of cattle at a processing plant with a daily capacity of no more than 500 head of cattle is \$4 per head.

Summary of Bill: The bill as referred to committee not considered.

Summary of Bill (Proposed Substitute): The minimum fee for the issuance of an inspection certificate by WSDA is \$10 and the time and mileage fee is \$27.50 per hour and the current mileage rate. The provision requiring that if in any one sale day the total fees collected for inspection do not exceed \$100 then the licensee must pay \$100 for the inspection services is removed. The fee for inspection of cattle at a processing plant with a daily capacity of no more than 500 head of cattle is \$6 per head.

WSDA must submit a report by November 30th of each year to the committees in the Legislature having oversight over agriculture and the Livestock Identification Advisory Board. The report must include amounts collected, a report on program expenditures, and any recommendations for improving the program or making it more efficient.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Proposed Substitute: PRO: This bill is designed to help the beef industry survive in the state of Washington. The number of beef in the state and in the nation rises and falls. A recent report from WSU showed that while the supply is high, the demand for beef has decreased. The brand inspection fees are important to make sure that the beef that is moving through Washington State are legally owned. This bill is needed in order to have the continuity so that folks know that their cattle is their cattle and their neighbor's cattle is their neighbor's cattle. The proposed substitute is needed. Industry stakeholders worked with the WSDA to put together this proposal. This bill is phase one of a fix that is a structural fix. The livestock inspection program ensures ownership and captures movement data for animal disease traceability. Operationally, this program is supported by several revenue streams, including brand recordings and inspection fees. Revenue generated from licenses and livestock inspections are not enough to cover the expenses and the costs of services that the program provides. This bill is well thought out, coupled with efficiencies at the markets. Industry wants to work with the WSDA to look at long term solutions, but to keep commerce moving, these services are essential. Of critical importance in the brand program is the disease tracking system, a healthy brand department is needed for that and this bill addresses it.

CON: The industry has gone through a dramatic downsizing over the past 20 years. There are far fewer ranchers and livestock to support the brand department. There needs to be a long-term, sustainable solution that does not put additional financial burdens on the remaining producers. Technology is the solution to the shortfall, not increased fees to

continue business as usual. Self reporting with cell phones, location monitoring, and photographs seem like viable option that should be considered.

OTHER: In support of this bill, asking for support.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Judy Warnick, Prime Sponsor; Brad Cameron, Neil Kayser, and Mark Streuli, WA Cattlemen's Assoc.; Jack Field, WA Cattle Feeders Assoc; Laura Butler and Lynn Briscoe, WSDA; Tyler Cox, citizen; Bill Sieverkropp, citizen.

CON: Scott Nielsen, Cattle Producers of WA.

OTHER: Jay Gordon, WA State Dairy Federation.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: PRO: Sam Ledgerwood, Dick Coon, Kevin Cernut, Amber Charlton, Kyler Beard, and Scott Gress, WA Cattlemen's Assoc.