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ENGROSSED SECOND SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 1562

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State of Washington

65th Legislature

2017 Regular Session

**By** House 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)

READ FIRST TIME 02/24/17.

1 AN ACT Relating to continuing the work of the Washington food  
2 policy forum; creating new sections; and providing an expiration  
3 date.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature finds that:

6 (a) Numerous governmental agencies, state programs, and private  
7 entities share goals and missions relating to food, nutrition,  
8 agriculture, health, education, and economic development through  
9 sustained agricultural production and improved access to nutritious  
10 foods;

11 (b) The food and agriculture industry generates fifty-one billion  
12 dollars annually, employs one hundred sixty thousand people, and  
13 contributes thirteen percent to the state's economy;

14 (c) Agriculture is a leading employer in the state, produces over  
15 three hundred different crops, and is composed of many diverse types  
16 of agricultural endeavors;

17 (d) The state of Washington continues to lose farmland every year  
18 to nonfarming uses;

19 (e) The state's food system is the network of people and  
20 activities connecting growing and harvesting, processing,  
21 distribution, consumption, and residue utilization, as well as

1 associated government and nongovernment institutions, regulations,  
2 and programs;

3 (f) Several nongovernmental and charitable organizations are  
4 engaged in the distribution of food to food banks and those in need,  
5 and there exists an opportunity to build on connections between these  
6 organizations and farmers to enhance the delivery of locally produced  
7 food to various food programs;

8 (g) The current food system in the state of Washington is complex  
9 and directly affected by the activities and policies of multiple  
10 federal and state agencies and local governments;

11 (h) Small acreage farms in Washington provide local food and  
12 maintain a vibrant culture of agriculture. Although several programs  
13 exist to support small farm operations there are opportunities to  
14 evaluate the effectiveness of these programs to reduce duplication of  
15 effort and streamline service delivery to the farmers; and

16 (i) The work done by the regional food policy councils in the  
17 state can serve as a model for local efforts to bring together  
18 community, government, business, and agricultural interests, and  
19 improved communication between these local activities, combined with  
20 state efforts, could strengthen the state food policy system.

21 (2) The legislature recognizes the need to understand the impacts  
22 of governmental rules and regulations on the viability of small  
23 acreage agriculture.

24 (3) The purpose of this act is to provide for the establishment  
25 of a forum to: (a) Increase the direct marketing sales of local farm  
26 products; (b) reduce food insecurity in Washington; (c) identify  
27 opportunities to improve coordination between local food policy  
28 councils and state and federal agencies; and (d) identify rules and  
29 regulations impeding the viability of small acreage agriculture.

30 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1) The Washington food policy forum is  
31 established as a public-private partnership and its purpose is to  
32 develop recommendations to advance the following food system goals:

33 (a) To increase direct marketing sales and consumption of  
34 Washington-grown foods;

35 (b) To expand and promote programs that bring healthy and  
36 nutritious Washington-grown foods to Washington residents, including  
37 increased state purchasing of local food products for schools, adult  
38 care programs, and other state-funded food programs;

1 (c) To examine ways to encourage retention of an adequate number  
2 of farmers for small scale farms, meet the educational needs for the  
3 next generation of farmers, and provide for the continued economic  
4 viability of local food production, processing, and distribution in  
5 the state;

6 (d) To reduce food insecurity and hunger in the state; and

7 (e) To identify ways to improve coordination and communication  
8 among local food policy entities and communication between the local  
9 food policy entities and state agencies.

10 (2) Recommendations of the food policy forum must consider, but  
11 not be limited to, ways in which the following may help achieve each  
12 of the goals identified under subsection (1) of this section:

13 (a) Increased collaboration and communication between local,  
14 state, and federal governments and agencies;

15 (b) Innovative public-private partnerships that can leverage  
16 private and public market influence, such as through institutional  
17 purchasing and contracts;

18 (c) Improvements to state or federal laws or regulations relevant  
19 to the small acreage farming interactions with the food system and  
20 food security in the state;

21 (d) Improvements in state or federal program implementation  
22 relevant to small acreage farming interactions with the food system  
23 and food security in the state;

24 (e) Identification of additional federal, state, local, and  
25 private investments needed to accomplish the recommendations; and

26 (f) Defining and describing the variety of agriculture in the  
27 state utilizing farm acreage, farm business type, crop and  
28 agricultural product type, and defining what the term "local" means  
29 in the context of food production and distribution.

30 (3) In developing its recommendations, the food policy forum:

31 (a) Shall coordinate with appropriate local, state, and federal  
32 agencies, tribes, and nongovernmental organizations to avoid  
33 duplication of effort;

34 (b) Shall solicit public input through public hearings or  
35 informational sessions;

36 (c) May conduct research and analysis as needed within financial  
37 resources available to the forum; and

38 (d) May form an advisory committee or committees to address  
39 issues identified by the forum and that are within the guidelines of

1 subsection (1) of this section, as requiring additional study or  
2 particular expertise.

3 (4) The directors of the state conservation commission and the  
4 department of agriculture are responsible for appointing  
5 participating members of the food policy forum and no appointment may  
6 be made unless each director concurs in the appointment. In making  
7 appointments, the directors must attempt to ensure a diversity of  
8 knowledge, experience, and perspectives reflecting the issues to be  
9 addressed by the forum including, but not limited to:

- 10 (a) State and federal government employees, including academia;  
11 (b) Related nonprofit and community organizations; and  
12 (c) The food industry, including food production, processing,  
13 distribution, marketing, and retail sales.

14 (5) A majority of the participating members appointed by the  
15 directors must appoint an administrative chair for the forum.

16 (6) In addition to members appointed by the directors, four  
17 legislators may serve on the food policy forum in an ex officio  
18 capacity. Legislative participants must be appointed as follows:

19 (a) The speaker of the house of representatives shall appoint one  
20 member from each of the two largest caucuses of the house of  
21 representatives; and

22 (b) The president of the senate shall appoint one member from  
23 each of the two largest caucuses of the senate.

24 (7) Each member of the food policy forum shall serve without  
25 compensation but may be reimbursed for travel expenses as authorized  
26 in RCW 43.03.050 and 43.03.060.

27 (8) Staff for the food policy forum must be provided by the state  
28 conservation commission and the department of agriculture. The state  
29 conservation commission and the department of agriculture are jointly  
30 responsible for transmitting the recommendations of the food policy  
31 forum to the legislature, consistent with RCW 43.01.036, by October  
32 29, 2018.

33 (9) This section expires July 1, 2019.

34 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** If specific funding for the purposes of  
35 this act, referencing this act by bill or chapter number, is not  
36 provided by June 30, 2017, in the omnibus appropriations act, this  
37 act is null and void.

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