
HOUSE BILL 2498

State of Washington

66th Legislature

2020 Regular Session

By Representatives Corry, Blake, Walsh, Mosbrucker, Chandler, Hoff, Dye, Graham, Davis, Dent, Dufault, Van Werven, Maycumber, Rude, Ybarra, Lekanoff, Eslick, and Leavitt

Read first time 01/15/20. Referred to Committee on Rural Development, Agriculture, & Natural Resources.

1 AN ACT Relating to providing compensation to department of
2 natural resources lessees whose leases are terminated for reasons
3 other than default; and amending RCW 79.13.420.

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

5 **Sec. 1.** RCW 79.13.420 and 2017 c 56 s 1 are each amended to read
6 as follows:

7 (1) For the purposes of this section, "nondefault or early
8 termination provision" means a provision that authorizes the
9 department to terminate a lease in the event the department includes
10 the leased land in a plan for higher and better use, land exchange,
11 or sale.

12 (2) Any nondefault or early termination provision included in a
13 state land lease for agricultural or grazing purposes must:

14 (a) Require advance written notice of at least one hundred eighty
15 days by the department to the lessee prior to termination of the
16 lease; and

17 (b) Require the department to provide to the lessee, along with
18 the notice under (a) of this subsection, written documentation
19 demonstrating that the department has included the leased land in a
20 plan for higher and better use, land exchange, or sale.

1 (3) This section does not require the department to include a
2 nondefault or early termination provision in any state land lease for
3 agricultural or grazing purposes.

4 (4) This section does not prohibit the department from allowing
5 the lessee to surrender the leasehold subject to terms provided in
6 the lease.

7 (5) This section does not prohibit the department from executing
8 other lease provisions designed to protect the interests of the
9 lessee in the event that the lease is terminated under a nondefault
10 or early termination provision.

11 (6) In the event that the department exercises a nondefault or
12 early termination provision in a state land lease for agricultural or
13 grazing purposes, the department shall compensate the lessee
14 according to the following schedule:

15 (a) For grazing leases, the department shall pay to the lessee
16 the annual rent for the land subject to the lease, multiplied by a
17 factor of six, except that the department need not compensate the
18 lessee for any years that are specifically designated in the lease as
19 nongrazing years.

20 (b) For agricultural leases, the department shall pay to the
21 lessee the expected net return the lessee would have realized from
22 crops raised on the leased land, which shall be calculated according
23 to the following formula: The annual net revenue per acre for the
24 class of crop produced by the lessee, less the rental rate per acre
25 for the land leased by the lessee; multiplied by the number of acres
26 leased by the lessee. For purposes of this subsection, the annual net
27 revenue per acre for a class of crop must be calculated according to
28 the most recent rolling average annual net rental return per acre for
29 that class of crop as established by the county assessor of the
30 county in which the leased land is located or, if the county assessor
31 of the county in which the land is located has not established an
32 annual net rental return per acre, as established by the county
33 assessor of the nearest county in which the county assessor has
34 established such an annual net rental return per acre. The annual net
35 rental return per acre, as established by the county assessor, must
36 be adjusted to reflect the total annual net revenue per acre.

37 (c) For both grazing leases and agricultural leases, the
38 department shall make payments to the lessee on an annual basis for
39 the remaining term of the terminated lease, unless the department and
40 the lessee agree to an alternate schedule of payments. In the event

1 that payments are made on any schedule other than on an annual basis,
2 any advance payments must be subjected to an appropriate discount
3 rate in order to reflect the net present value of the compensation
4 owed by the department.

5 (d) For both grazing leases and agricultural leases, in the event
6 that the lessee has placed any improvements on the land that is
7 subject to the lease, the department is responsible for compensating
8 the lessee for the value of the improvements.

9 (7) In the event that the department's exercise of a nondefault
10 or early termination provision in a state land lease for agricultural
11 or grazing purposes results in the removal of fencing from the land
12 subject to the lease, the department is responsible for ensuring the
13 replacement of any removed fencing.

14 (8) In the event that the department's exercise of a nondefault
15 or early termination provision in a state land lease for agricultural
16 or grazing purposes causes the lessee to incur a financial penalty as
17 a result of an early withdrawal from a natural resources conservation
18 service program, the department is responsible for reimbursing the
19 lessee for payment of the financial penalty.

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