

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SB 5615

As Reported by House Committee On:
State Government & Tribal Relations

Title: An act relating to designating pickleball as the official state sport.

Brief Description: Designating pickleball as the official state sport.

Sponsors: Senators Lovick, Hunt, Hasegawa, Honeyford, Lovelett, Nobles, Pedersen, Randall, Rolfes and Wellman.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

State Government & Tribal Relations: 2/17/22, 2/21/22 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Designates pickleball as the official state sport.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT & TRIBAL RELATIONS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 5 members: Representatives Valdez, Chair; Lekanoff, Vice Chair; Volz, Ranking Minority Member; Dolan and Gregerson.

Minority Report: Without recommendation. Signed by 2 members: Representatives Walsh, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Graham.

Staff: Jason Zolle (786-7124).

Background:

The sport of pickleball was created in 1965 on Bainbridge Island by Joel McFee Pritchard, who went on to be elected lieutenant governor and member of Congress for Washington, along with two of his friends, Bill Bell and Barney McCallum. Combining elements of

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tennis, badminton, and ping-pong, pickleball is played with a paddle and a plastic ball similar to a wiffle ball. The national governing body for pickleball, USA Pickleball, has approximately 40,000 registered members and estimates that over four million people play pickleball at nearly 8,500 locations nationally. The International Federation of Pickleball has 67 member countries.

Summary of Bill:

Pickleball is designated as the official state sport.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) Washington does not have an official state sport, but pickleball is a now-international sport that was created right here in Washington on Bainbridge Island. Joel Pritchard was one of the sport's founders and he was a devoted servant to Washington. There is an entire industry in Washington devoted to manufacturing pickleball equipment. There were over 700 pickleball tournaments in the United States last year, including an annual tournament on Bainbridge Island. An upcoming 900-player tournament in Spokane will generate \$500,000 in revenue. Sometimes the Legislature needs to pass bills that are simply fun.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Senator John Lovick, prime sponsor; Kate Van Gent; Chuck Wright; Ralph Munro; and Jeremy Paget, Pickle Will Tickle.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.