

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 5306

As Passed House:
February 28, 2024

Title: An act relating to authorizing the department of fish and wildlife to establish disease interdiction and control check stations.

Brief Description: Authorizing the department of fish and wildlife to establish disease interdiction and control check stations.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Agriculture, Water, Natural Resources & Parks (originally sponsored by Senators Short, Van De Wege, Nobles and Stanford; by request of Department of Fish and Wildlife).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Agriculture & Natural Resources: 3/14/23, 2/20/24, 2/21/24 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 2/28/24, 93-1.

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Authorizes the Department of Fish and Wildlife to establish voluntary disease interdiction and control check stations.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 8 members: Representatives Chapman, Chair; Reeves, Vice Chair; Dent, Ranking Minority Member; Kloba, Lekanoff, Orcutt, Schmick and Springer.

Staff: Robert Hatfield (786-7117).

Background:

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

The Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) is responsible for the management of the state's fish and wildlife resources. Among other duties, the agency must classify wildlife and establish rules and regulations governing the time, place, manner, and methods used to harvest or enjoy fish and wildlife. Specifically, this includes the authority to:

- regulate the importation, transportation, possession, disposal, landing, and sale of fish, shellfish, and wildlife in the state; and
- regulate the prevention and suppression of diseases and pests affecting wildlife, fish, or shellfish.

Summary of Bill:

The Department of Fish and Wildlife may establish disease interdiction and control check stations. These stations may be signed from roadsides, including state highways and interstates. Signage must indicate which diseases or infestations are being investigated, and what fish, wildlife, shellfish, and seaweed are being checked. The signage must be placed in coordination with the Department of Transportation.

Check stations must be operated in a safe manner. A person who encounters a disease interdiction and control check station while transporting fish, wildlife, shellfish, or seaweed in their possession is requested to stop at the check station and allow the fish, wildlife, shellfish, or seaweed in their possession to be inspected and sampled for the diseases or infestations.

The disease interdiction and control check stations would not apply to aquaculture, aquatic farmers, or private sector cultured aquatic products.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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) Chronic wasting disease is in four Canadian provinces and 30 states, including Idaho. Placing signage on roads is tightly controlled by the Department of Transportation. This bill would allow the Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) to put up signage along roads to request that hunters stop so that the DFW can check carcasses for chronic wasting disease and other diseases. The DFW is making an effort to prevent chronic wasting disease from getting established in Washington. If the proteins that spread chronic wasting disease get into the soil, they can remain there for years. Washington has a very good track record of compliance by hunters on taking steps to reduce the spread of disease.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Senator Shelly Short, prime sponsor; and Tom McBride, Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.