

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 1153

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Agriculture, Water, Natural Resources & Parks, February 19, 2024

Title: An act relating to prohibiting octopus farming.

Brief Description: Prohibiting octopus farming.

Sponsors: Representatives Peterson, Fitzgibbon, Berry, Walen, Bateman, Goodman, Leavitt, Macri, Gregerson, Stonier, Pollet and Fosse.

Brief History: Passed House: 2/6/24, 70-27.

Committee Activity: Agriculture, Water, Natural Resources & Parks: 2/14/24, 2/19/24 [DP, DNP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Prohibits octopus farming in the state of Washington.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, WATER, NATURAL RESOURCES & PARKS

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Van De Wege, Chair; Salomon, Vice Chair; Liias, Shewmake and Stanford.

Minority Report: Do not pass.

Signed by Senators Muzzall, Ranking Member; Short, Wagoner and Warnick.

Staff: Jeff Olsen (786-7428)

Background: Aquaculture is the culture or farming of fish, shellfish, and other aquatic plants and animals in fresh or salt water areas. In Washington, aquaculture occurs in both fresh and marine waters such as streams, rivers, lakes, the Puget Sound, and on the coast.

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.

Commercial aquaculture activities include raising, harvesting, transporting, and selling fish and shellfish. Other aquaculture activities are designed to help restore and enhance resources. This includes fish and shellfish hatcheries and planting and growing native aquatic plants to restore or enhance habitat. Private sector cultured aquatic products in Washington include clams, oysters, prawns, trout, salmon, geoducks, and kelp, among others. Commercial net-pen aquaculture of nonnative finfish, including Atlantic salmon, has been prohibited in Washington.

Aquaculture is regulated by the departments of Ecology, Health, Fish and Wildlife, and Natural Resources, as well as local and tribal governments, and other state and federal agencies.

Summary of Bill: The definition of private sector cultured aquatic products does not include octopus, and a person may not participate in octopus aquaculture in Washington.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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: PRO: While currently there are no octopus farms in Washington, we should make a statement and not allow it to protect Washington waters. Octopus are sentient beings and solitary creatures that should not be caged. Octopus are carnivores and require a significant amount of food, which could disrupt ecosystem balance. Washington should prevent a repeat of the environmental issues created by the Atlantic salmon net pen collapse and protect our ecosystem. Octopus are intended for the luxury market for high end consumers.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Representative Strom Peterson, Prime Sponsor; Brenna Anderst, Pasado's Safe Haven/Education & Advocacy Director; Jennifer Jacquet; Amanda Fox, Animal Rights Initiative; Josh Diamond; Rachel Bjork, Northwest Animal Rights Network (NARN); Wendy Linton; Alex Cerussi, Mercy For Animals; Allie Molinaro, Compassion in World Farming; Hannah Bugga.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.