

SENATE BILL REPORT

SSB 5306

As Passed Senate, February 8, 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, Water, Natural Resources & Parks: 1/23/23, 2/02/23 [DPS].

Floor Activity: Passed Senate: 2/22/23, 49-0; 2/8/24, 47-0.

Brief Summary of First Substitute Bill

- Authorizes the Department of Fish and Wildlife to establish voluntary disease interdiction and control check stations that may be signed from state highways and interstates.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, WATER, NATURAL RESOURCES & PARKS

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5306 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Van De Wege, Chair; Salomon, Vice Chair; Muzzall, Ranking Member; Rolfes, Shewmake, Short, Stanford, Wagoner and Warnick.

Staff: Jeff Olsen (786-7428)

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.

Background: 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 First Substitute Bill: DFW may establish disease interdiction and control check stations that 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.

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 on Original Bill: *The committee recommended a different version of the bill than what was heard.* PRO: This is an important tool to allow DFW to monitor for wildlife diseases, especially chronic wasting disease. With chronic wasting disease spreading in neighboring states and Canada, it is important to have visible check stations along highways for hunters to ensure that their meat is not contaminated. These check points will be voluntary for hunters to allow DFW to sample for diseases. There tends to be good compliance among hunters, and voluntary check points avoid the legal and monetary issues of mandatory check points. Disease detection and prevention is important with chronic wasting disease, which can spread and if it ends up in the soil, can last for years.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Shelly Short, Prime Sponsor; Tom McBride, WDFW.

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