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**HOUSE BILL 1294**

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**State of Washington**

**69th Legislature**

**2025 Regular Session**

**By** Representatives Dent, Reeves, Timmons, and Hill

Read first time 01/14/25. Referred to Committee on Agriculture & Natural Resources.

1 AN ACT Relating to extending the pesticide application safety  
2 committee; amending RCW 70.104.110; amending 2019 c 327 s 1  
3 (uncodified); providing an effective date; providing expiration  
4 dates; and declaring an emergency.

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

6 **Sec. 1.** RCW 70.104.110 and 2019 c 327 s 2 are each amended to  
7 read as follows:

8 (1) The pesticide application safety committee is established.  
9 Appointments to the committee must be made as soon as possible after  
10 the legislature convenes in regular session. The committee is  
11 composed of the following members:

12 (a) One member from each of the two largest caucuses of the house  
13 of representatives, appointed by the speaker of the house of  
14 representatives;

15 (b) One member from each of the two largest caucuses of the  
16 senate, appointed by the president of the senate;

17 (c) The director of the department of agriculture, or an  
18 assistant director designated by the director;

19 (d) The secretary of the department of health, or an assistant  
20 secretary designated by the secretary;

1 (e) The director of the department of labor and industries, or an  
2 assistant director designated by the director;

3 (f) The commissioner of public lands, or an assistant  
4 commissioner designated by the commissioner;

5 (g) The dean of the college of agricultural, human, and natural  
6 resource sciences at the Washington State University, or an assistant  
7 dean designated by the dean;

8 (h) The pesticide safety education coordinator at the Washington  
9 State University cooperative extension; and

10 (i) The director of the University of Washington Pacific  
11 Northwest agricultural safety and health center, or an assistant  
12 designated by the director.

13 (2) The committee shall be cochaired by the secretary of the  
14 department of health, or the assistant secretary designated by the  
15 secretary, and the director of the department of agriculture, or the  
16 assistant director designated by the director.

17 (3) Primary responsibility for administrative support for the  
18 committee, including developing reports, research, and other  
19 organizational support, shall be provided by the department of health  
20 and the department of agriculture. The committee must hold its first  
21 meeting by September 2019. The committee must meet at least three  
22 times each year. The meetings shall be at a time and place specified  
23 by the cochairs, or at the call of a majority of the committee. When  
24 determining the time and place of meetings, the cochairs must  
25 consider costs and conduct committee meetings in Olympia when this  
26 choice would reduce costs to the state.

27 (4)(a) An advisory work group is created to collect information  
28 and make recommendations to the full committee on topics requiring  
29 unique expertise and perspectives on issues within the jurisdiction  
30 of the committee.

31 (b) The advisory work group shall consist of a representative  
32 from the department of agriculture, two representatives of employee  
33 organizations that represent farmworkers, two farmworkers with  
34 expertise on pesticide application, a representative of community and  
35 migrant health centers, a toxicologist, a representative of growers  
36 who use air blast sprayers, a representative of growers who use  
37 aerial pesticide application, a representative of growers who use  
38 fumigation to apply pesticides, and a representative of aerial  
39 applicators. The secretary of health, in consultation with the  
40 director of the department of agriculture and the full committee,

1 must appoint members of the advisory work group, and the department  
2 of health must staff the advisory work group. The letter of  
3 appointment to the advisory work group members must be signed by both  
4 cochairs.

5 (c) The advisory work group must hold meetings only upon the  
6 committee's request. (~~To reduce costs, the advisory work group must~~  
7 ~~conduct meetings using teleconferencing or other methods, but may~~  
8 ~~hold one in-person meeting per fiscal year.~~)

9 (d) Members of the advisory work group shall be reimbursed for  
10 mileage expenses in accordance with RCW 43.03.060.

11 (e) The advisory work group must provide a report on their  
12 activities and recommendations to the full committee by November 9th  
13 of each year.

14 (5) The first priority of the committee is to explore how the  
15 departments of agriculture, labor and industries, and health, and the  
16 Washington poison center collect and track data. The committee must  
17 also consider the feasibility and requirements of developing a shared  
18 database, including how the department of health could use existing  
19 tools, such as the tracking network, to better display multiagency  
20 data regarding pesticides. The committee may also evaluate and  
21 recommend policy options that would take action to:

22 (a) Improve pesticide application safety with agricultural  
23 applications;

24 (b) Lead an effort to establish baseline data for the type and  
25 quantity of pesticide applications used in Washington to be able to  
26 compare the number of exposures with overall number of applications;

27 (c) Research ways to improve pesticide application communication  
28 among different members of the agricultural community, including  
29 educating the public in English and Spanish about acute and chronic  
30 health information about pesticides;

31 (d) Compile industry's best practices for use to improve  
32 pesticide application safety to limit pesticide exposure;

33 (e) Continue to investigate reasons why members of the  
34 agricultural workforce do not or may not report pesticide exposure;

35 (f) Explore new avenues for reporting with investigation without  
36 fear of retaliation;

37 (g) Work with stakeholders to consider trainings for how and when  
38 to report;

39 (h) Explore incentives for using new technology by funding a  
40 partial buy-out program for old spray technology;

- 1 (i) Consider developing an effective community health education  
2 plan;
- 3 (j) Consult with community partners to enhance educational  
4 initiatives that work with the agricultural workforce, their  
5 families, and surrounding communities to reduce the risk of pesticide  
6 exposure;
- 7 (k) Enhance efforts to work with pesticide manufacturers and the  
8 environmental protection agency to improve access to non-English  
9 pesticide labeling in the United States;
- 10 (l) Work with research partners to develop, or promote the use of  
11 translation apps for pesticide label safety information, or both;
- 12 (m) Evaluate prevention techniques to minimize exposure events;
- 13 (n) Develop more Spanish language and other language educational  
14 materials for distribution, including through social media and app-  
15 based learning for agricultural workforce communities;
- 16 (o) Explore development of an agricultural workforce education  
17 safety program to improve the understanding about leaving an area  
18 being sprayed; and
- 19 (p) Work with the industry and the agricultural workforce to  
20 improve protocols and best practices for use of personal safety  
21 equipment for applicators and reflective gear for the general  
22 workforce.
- 23 (6) The committee must provide a report to the appropriate  
24 committees of the legislature by May 1, 2020, and each year  
25 thereafter. An initial report on the progress of the committee must  
26 be provided in January 2020. The report may include recommendations  
27 the committee determines necessary, and must document the activities  
28 of the committee and report on the subjects listed in subsection (5)  
29 of this section. The department of health and the department of  
30 agriculture must provide staff support to the committee for the  
31 purpose of authoring the report and transmitting it to the  
32 legislature. Any member of the committee may provide a minority  
33 report as an appendix to the report submitted to the legislature  
34 under this section.
- 35 (7) This section expires July 1, ((2025)) 2035.

36 **Sec. 2.** 2019 c 327 s 1 (uncodified) is amended to read as  
37 follows:

38 (1) In 2018, the legislature passed Engrossed Second Substitute  
39 Senate Bill No. 6529. The bill recognized that farmers, farmworkers,

1 and the broader community share an interest in minimizing human  
2 exposure to pesticides. It also recognized that gains have been made  
3 in reducing human exposure to pesticides and that collaboration  
4 between state agencies and the farming community could further reduce  
5 agricultural workers exposure to pesticide drift.

6 (2) The legislation established a pesticide application safety  
7 work group that would make recommendations for improving pesticide  
8 application safety. Work group members included legislators from both  
9 chambers and caucuses, as well as representation from state agencies  
10 and the commission on Hispanic affairs. The work group sought public  
11 participation to learn more about pesticide application safety. Many  
12 stakeholders including but not limited to local farm hosts, the  
13 agricultural industry, and members of the agricultural workforce  
14 contributed valuable assistance and input.

15 (3) The work group reached two noteworthy recommendations  
16 regarding what can be done now to improve pesticide application  
17 safety. The recommendations are to:

18 (a) Expand training because the department of agriculture lacks  
19 sufficient resources to meet the training demand from pesticide  
20 applicators and handlers; and

21 (b) Establish a new pesticide application safety panel to provide  
22 an opportunity to evaluate and recommend policy options, and  
23 investigate exposure cases.

24 (4) The work group concluded that legislation is warranted to  
25 expand funding for a training program and set up a new pesticide  
26 application safety panel with clear objectives.

27 (5) This section expires July 1, ((2025)) 2035.

28 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** This act is necessary for the immediate  
29 preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of  
30 the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes  
31 effect July 1, 2025.

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