

SENATE BILL REPORT

SSB 5407

AS PASSED SENATE, MARCH 10, 1993

Brief Description: Regarding county administration of agricultural burning permits.

SPONSORS: Senate Committee on Ecology & Parks (originally sponsored by Senators Loveland, Barr and M. Rasmussen)

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ECOLOGY & PARKS

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5407 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Fraser, Chairman; Barr, Deccio, Moore, Sutherland, and Talmadge.

Staff: Shannon Murphy (786-7483)

Hearing Dates: February 12, 1993; February 22, 1993

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

BACKGROUND:

A permit is required for agricultural open burning, burning for weed abatement, and for fires set for fire fighting training. The permit system is administered by the Department of Ecology, and by local air pollution control authorities where such authorities exist. Permits may be issued on a seasonal or individual fire basis, and are to comply with statewide standards adopted by the department. Applicants for permits are to show that the setting of fires is reasonably necessary, and permits are to be designed to minimize air pollution. Time limits for acting upon permit applications are specified in circumstances such as controlling diseases, insects, weed abatement, and increasing crop yield. Permit fees are to be assessed to cover the administrative costs.

SUMMARY:

The Department of Ecology and local air authorities are required to provide convenient methods for issuance and oversight of agricultural burn permits. Convenient methods for obtaining an agricultural burn permit may include telephone, facsimile transmission and issuance from local city or county offices.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: requested March 3, 1993

TESTIMONY FOR:

Obtaining an agricultural burn permit from the Department of Ecology needs to be made more convenient. In some areas of the state, persons are required to drive long distances to obtain a permit.

TESTIMONY AGAINST: None

TESTIFIED: Senator Valoria Loveland (pro); David G. Carey, Walla Walla County (pro); June Hansen, Lewis County (pro); Charlotte Danforth, Lewis County (pro)

HOUSE AMENDMENT(S):

The House amendment allows a local entity to recover the costs of administering the issuance of agricultural burning permits. Additionally, the amendment allows a local air authority to delegate permitting authority for agricultural burning to any fire protection agency, county or conservation district within the jurisdiction of the local air authority.