

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 6343

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As of January 20, 2010

**Title:** An act relating to the establishment of the Washington food policy council.

**Brief Description:** Establishing the Washington food policy council.

**Sponsors:** Senators Jacobsen, Kohl-Welles, Swecker, Haugen, Hatfield and Keiser.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Agriculture & Rural Economic Development: 1/21/10.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**Staff:** Bob Lee (786-7404)

**Background:** Food policy councils (FPCs) have been formed in different regions of the United States. Some are formed by cities, counties, and states, and some by nongovernmental organizations. Generally, these councils are comprised from various stakeholders of a local food system. Typically, councils are sanctioned through governmental action such as a Governor's Executive Order, state law, or local ordinance. Some FPCs have formed through grassroots efforts and operate without an official convening document. FPCs often involve innovative collaborations between citizen groups and government officials to give voice to concerns and interests in a range of topics including: food production, nutrition, obesity, hunger, and other food system related issues.

**Summary of Bill:** The Washington Food Policy Council is established to develop recommendations to advance the following food system goals:

1. increase production, sales, and consumption of Washington-grown foods;
2. develop and promote programs that bring healthy Washington grown foods to its residents, including increased state purchasing of local food products for school, adult care programs, and other state funded food programs;
3. review and develop programs that support proper nutrition and avoid burdens of obesity and chronic diet-related diseases;
4. to protect the land and water resources needed for sustained food production;
5. to examine ways to encourage retention of an adequate number of farmers, education needs for an adequate agricultural workforce and provide for continued economic viability of local food production, processing, and distribution; and

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6. to reduce food insecurity and hunger in the state and ensure the benefits of a healthy food system is shared with families at all income levels, particularly vulnerable children, the elderly, the disabled, and communities of color.

The council has 17 members including seven agency, two university, and eight interest group representatives. The state agency and university representatives are invited to participate include:

1. the director of the Department of Agriculture;
2. the secretary of the Department of Health;
3. the Superintendent of Public Instruction;
4. the director of the Department of Commerce;
5. the secretary of the Department of Social and Health Services;
6. the dean of the College of Agricultural, Human, and Natural Resource Sciences at Washington State University;
7. the director of the Department of Ecology;
8. the chair of the State Conservation Commission; and
9. a representative from the University of Washington who has expertise in food systems or nutrition appointed by its president.

The following public members must be appointed by the Governor:

1. two who are farmers or representatives of a farm organization, with at least one representing small and medium sized farmers;
2. a food distribution, processing, and marketing representative;
3. a representative of direct-to-consumer marketing;
4. a representative of community-based efforts to address nutrition and public health;
5. a representative who represents nongovernmental statewide anti-hunger efforts;
6. a representative of food banks; and
7. a representative of a nongovernmental statewide organization with interest in protection of the state's land, air and water.

The chair of the council will be elected by the members for a term not to exceed two years. The first meeting of the council must occur within 120 days of the effective date. At the first meeting, the council must elect a chair and discuss potential funding sources from both public and private sources.

The chair is responsible for working with council members to search for and apply for funding from federal sources, private foundations, and other nonstate general fund sources. Once funding needs have been determined with a funding source, the council chair is to convene a second meeting. The council then can proceed, within available funds, to develop a work plan.

No state agency or state university may be compelled to incur expenses in connection with the operation of the council. Appointed public members of the council must serve without compensation from state funds. Members of the council may receive reimbursement from the council for travel expenses if funds for council operations are available.

The council must report its initial findings and recommendations by December 1 of the year following the date of the second meeting of the council and annually after that. The reports

are to be submitted to the Governor, the Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives, and the Secretary of the Senate.

The council expires on July 1, 2015.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Committee/Commission/Task Force Created:** Yes.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.