

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6556

As of January 21, 2010

Title: An act relating to changing fees for certain types of agricultural burning.

Brief Description: Changing the fees for certain types of agricultural burning.

Sponsors: Senators Hatfield and Schoesler.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Agriculture & Rural Economic Development: 1/25/10.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Staff: Bob Lee (786-7404)

Background: The maximum permit fee for agricultural field burning is set at \$2.50 per acre. This statutory cap was established in 1991. The fee is established by rule adopted by the Department of Ecology (DOE) at the level determined by the agricultural burning practices and research task force.

The revenue from burning permit fees is deposited in the air pollution control account, except for that portion necessary to cover the local cost of administering the permit. The remainder of the money is used to fund the smoke management program which prevents burning during adverse meteorological conditions, and to fund research into alternatives for field burning.

Currently, the fee is \$2.25 and is used as follows: \$1.25 is retained by delegated permitting entities; 50 cents goes toward the smoke management program; and, 50 cents goes toward research.

After fees are established by rule, any increase is limited to annual inflation adjustments as determined by the state office of the Economic and Revenue Forecast Council.

Burning of orchard pruning is exempt but burning of piles of orchard trees is not exempt from the permit process.

Summary of Bill: The current statutory maximum permit fee for agricultural field burning of \$2.50 per acre is increased to \$3.75 per acre. Authority to charge a permit fee for pile

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burning is provided and is not to exceed \$1 per ton. Fees continue to be set by rule adopted by the DOE at the level determined by the agricultural burning practices and research task force.

After fees are established by rule, any increase is limited to annual inflation adjustments as determined by the state office of the Economic and Revenue Forecast Council.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 18, 2010.
[OFM requested ten-year cost projection pursuant to I-960]

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: None.

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