

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2136

As Reported By House Committee On:

Agriculture & Ecology

Title: An act relating to funding hydrilla eradication.

Brief Description: Authorizing freshwater aquatic weeds account moneys to be used for hydrilla eradication.

Sponsors: Representatives Chandler, Chappell, Horn, Rust, Mastin, Dickerson, Honeyford, Robertson, Smith and Murray; by request of Department of Ecology.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Agriculture & Ecology: 1/17/96, 1/18/96 [DP].

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & ECOLOGY

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 15 members: Representatives Chandler, Chairman; Koster, Vice Chairman; Chappell, Ranking Minority Member; Linville, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Boldt; Clements; R. Fisher; Honeyford; Johnson; Mastin; Ogden; Regala; Robertson; Rust and Schoesler.

Staff: Bill Lynch (786-7092).

Background: The State Noxious Weed Control Board is required to adopt a state noxious weed list at least once a year after public hearing. The list of noxious weeds is divided into three classes: A, B, and C. The class A list consists of those noxious weeds that are not native to the state that are of limited distribution or are unrecorded, and that pose a serious threat to the state. The board must send a copy of the list to each activated county noxious weed control board, each regional noxious weed control board, each weed district, and to each county legislative authority with an inactive noxious weed control board.

The State Noxious Weed Control Board is proposing to add hydrilla (*Hydrilla verticillata*) to the class A list. Hydrilla is an aquatic weed that will form dense canopies. These canopies often shade out native vegetation, decrease oxygen in the water, raise the pH of the water, and increase the temperature of the water. Hydrilla can produce impacts upon fish and wildlife habitat, recreation, power generation, and irrigation. Hydrilla has been located in one lake system in Washington.

Moneys contained in the freshwater aquatic weeds account may be appropriated to the Department of Ecology to develop a freshwater aquatic weeds management program to: (1) issue grants to cities, counties, and state agencies to prevent, remove, reduce, or manage excessive freshwater aquatic weeds; (2) develop public education programs relating to preventing the propagation and spread of freshwater aquatic weeds; (3) provide technical assistance to local governments and citizen groups; and (4) fund demonstration or pilot programs pertaining to management of freshwater aquatic weeds.

The grants to cities, counties and state agencies may only be used in lakes, rivers, and streams with a public boat launching ramp. There is no authority to use funds in this account for hydrilla eradication in state waters without a public boat launching ramp.

Summary of Bill: Funds in the freshwater aquatic weeds account may be appropriated to the Department of Ecology to fund hydrilla eradication activities in waters of the state.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: Hydrilla is a major problem in states where it has become established. Florida has spent \$56 million trying to eradicate hydrilla. It has been located in Pike and Lucerne Lakes, which are connected lakes. Herbicides are already being used, and an educational campaign is being implemented.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Dick Wallace, Department of Ecology; and Enid Layes, Washington Friends of Farmers & Forests (in favor).