

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 2605

---

---

**As Reported By House Committee On:**  
Natural Resources

**Title:** An act relating to importation of *Macrocystis* seaweed.

**Brief Description:** Allowing importation of *Macrocystis* seaweed for the use in the herring spawn-on-kelp fishery.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Linville, Fuhrman, L. Thomas, Thompson, Regala, Basich, Quall, Hatfield, B. Thomas, Stevens, Sheldon and Buck.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Natural Resources: 1/30/96, 1/31/96 [DPS].

---

### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

**Majority Report:** The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 13 members: Representatives Fuhrman, Chairman; Buck, Vice Chairman; Pennington, Vice Chairman; Regala, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Beeksma; Elliot; Hatfield; Jacobsen; Keiser; Sheldon; Stevens; L. Thomas and Thompson.

**Staff:** Rick Anderson (786-7114).

**Background:** Seaweed is used extensively by fish populations for protection and for spawning. Studies have shown that removal of seaweed, especially kelp, has a detrimental effect on salmon production. *Macrocystis* is a type of seaweed used in the herring spawn on kelp fishery.

Legislation enacted in 1993 limited the entry into the herring spawn on kelp fishery. This legislation limited the total number of license holders to five for this fishery. Specified license holders are eligible to bid for the limited entry licenses on an annual basis. Persons in the herring spawn on kelp fishery typically harvest the tops of the *Macrocystis* plant, place it in a net, and introduce herring into the net. The herring eggs are then harvested from the seaweed, processed, and marketed. Due to the limited availability of *Macrocystis* in this state, the plant is generally imported from Canada for this fishery.

State law prohibits importation of seaweed species of *Macrocystis* after July 1, 1995, for use in the herring spawn on kelp fishery.

**Summary of Substitute Bill:** The generic prohibition against importing *Macrocystis* for use in the herring spawn on kelp fishery is removed. The Department of Fish and Wildlife is authorized to ban the importation of *Macrocystis* in specific areas where the presence of fish or shellfish diseases would make it likely that the disease would be imported along with the *Macrocystis*. The department is required to incorporate this importation policy into its policy for fish and shellfish disease control.

**Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:** The substitute bill clarifies that the department can ban the importation of *Macrocystis* from specific areas using its fish and shellfish disease control policies.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

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

**Testimony For:** Kelp imported from Canada is vital for the continued non-tribal participation in the herring spawn on kelp fishery. Stringent regulations exist to ensure that the imported kelp will not cause disease problems.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Testified:** Representative Kelli Linville, prime sponsor; Don Stuart, Salmon for Washington; Gene Vitalich, commercial fisherman; Jim Glenovich, commercial fisherman (pro); and Cyreis Schmitt, Department of Fish and Wildlife.