

SENATE BILL REPORT

SSB 5742

As Passed Senate, March 9, 1995

Title: An act relating to the recruitment, preparation, and continuing education of vocational agriculture teachers.

Brief Description: Establishing the Washington state vocational agriculture teacher recruitment program.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Education (originally sponsored by Senators Rasmussen, Hochstatter, McAuliffe and Loveland).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Education: 2/14/95, 2/24/95 [DPS].
Passed Senate, 3/9/95, 46-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5742 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators McAuliffe, Chair; Pelz, Vice Chair; Finkbeiner, Gaspard, Hochstatter, Johnson and Rasmussen.

Staff: Susan Mielke (786-7422)

Background: Washington has a rich agricultural history, and agriculture continues to be an important industry of the state. However, the number of persons entering the field of vocational agricultural education is declining. One way to reverse this decline is through a teacher recruitment program.

Summary of Bill: The State Board of Education (SBE) must design a Washington State Vocational Agriculture Teacher Recruitment Program. The SBE must consult with the Higher Education Coordinating Board, the institutions of higher education, organizations interested in teacher recruitment or agriculture education, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, and the Department of Agriculture when designing the program. The purpose of the program is to recruit students in grades 9-12, and adults who have entered other occupations to be future vocational agriculture teachers.

The Superintendent of Public Instruction must use part of any federal funds received for professional preparation and in-service programs to support the preparation and continuing education of vocational agriculture educators, and to design the future vocational agriculture teachers' program.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 6, 1995.

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

Testimony For: Agriculture is an important industry to the economy of Washington State. Four years ago, there were 26 openings for agriculture education teachers; three years ago, there were 38 openings; two years ago, there were 40 openings; and last year there were 52 openings. In each of the last five years, there have been less than ten graduates from the only in-state higher education agriculture education program at Washington State University. What will happen to the state's economy if strong agriculture education is not continued?

Vocational agriculture curriculum addresses not only the many different aspects of agriculture, but also provides leadership components and skills that can transfer to other subject areas. Students who participate in a vocational agriculture program prepare for jobs not only in agriculture, but business and other areas of work.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Dorene Mykol, SBE (pro); Cory Rawding, Mike Hickman, Kari Beerbower, National Future Farmers of America (pro).

House Amendment(s): The State Board of Education is required to also consult with representatives of statewide agricultural business organizations when developing the recruitment program. References to using federal funds for the recruitment program are removed, and a null and void clause is added.