

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6186

As of January 23, 1998

Title: An act relating to livestock identification.

Brief Description: Identifying livestock.

Sponsors: Senators Swecker and Rasmussen; by request of Department of Agriculture.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Agriculture & Environment: 1/27/98.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & ENVIRONMENT

Staff: Paul Mabrey (786-7412)

Background: Washington's Livestock Identification Program is administered by the Department of Agriculture's Consumer and Producer Protection Division. The program operates to maintain official livestock brands and to inspect livestock and/or documentation at mandatory inspection points in order to verify ownership. General state funding of the Livestock Identification Program was discontinued in recent years and is now funded entirely by the livestock industry.

Since 1992, the Livestock Identification Program experienced a negative account balance which was addressed by increasing fees for service in 1993 and 1994. The program improved its financial condition over the ensuing four years but fee increases and administrative adjustments have not resolved the negative balance which, in 1997, was approximately \$92,000. The negative balance is expected to increase in 1998 due to a 3 percent salary adjustment, inflationary increases, and a legislatively mandated 20 percent rollback in most fees effective July 1, 1998.

The fee for inspecting cattle prior to movement out of the state and in private sales is currently 75 cents per head or \$15 per hour plus mileage, whichever is greater. The time and mileage alternative is not authorized for inspections prior to slaughter nor for inspections prior to entry into certified feed lots.

Special sales include sales held at public livestock markets on days other than those authorized by their license, sales held by farmers' cooperative associations, and sales by purebred producers selling their purebred livestock at public sale. Application to hold a special sale is required 15 days prior to the sale and there is no application fee.

Summary of Bill: Three new definitions are provided establishing certificates of permit, inspection certificates, and self-inspection certificates. The certificate of permit enables owners of livestock to verify ownership of livestock but is not evidence of inspection. The inspection certificate verifies that the livestock has been inspected by the director and includes an individual identification certificate issued by the director. The self inspection

certificate is a form used by owners of livestock who inspect their own livestock and who sign the form verifying the inspection.

The time and mileage charge alternative to the fee-per-head charge is authorized at all inspection points, except public livestock markets, including feed lot inspections and inspections prior to slaughter.

An application fee of \$50 is established for special sales.

Program fees are modified. Brand recording fees are increased to \$70 for every two years of brand ownership and most inspection fees are increased 20 percent. Lower inspection fees are established for dairy calves and certified feed lot per-head fees are reduced. The following table summarizes the fee changes.

Fee Type	Current Fee	Fee Effective 7/1/98	New Fee
Brand recording	\$35.00	\$35.00	\$70.00
Late brand recording	\$10.00	\$10.00	\$15.00
Cattle Inspection/Head	\$0.75	\$0.60	\$0.90
Dairy Calf Inspection	\$0.75	\$0.60	\$0.20
Horse Inspection/Head	\$3.00	\$2.40	\$4.00
Annual Individual ID	\$7.50	\$0.50	\$9.00
Lifetime Individual ID	\$15.00	\$15.00	\$18.00
Certified Feedlot License	\$750.00	\$600.00	\$750.00
Certified Feedlot Per Head Fee	\$0.15	\$0.12	\$0.10
Public Livestock Market License <i>(Based on average gross sales)</i>	\$150 \$350 \$450	\$120 \$240 \$360	\$450.00
Minimum Daily Fee	\$90.00	\$72.00	\$90.00
Beef Tags, set of four	\$1.50	\$1.50	\$2.00
Certificates of Permit (per 25)	\$1.00	\$1.00	\$2.00

Most program fees are codified and removed from rule-making authority.

Administrative changes are made including: (1) redefining "brand inspection" as "livestock inspection," (2) public livestock market licensing clarification inserting provisions for rule making to establish criteria for license renewal, (3) elimination of the bill of sale as accepted proof of ownership for branded cattle, (4) elimination of requirement for sellers to keep

records for three years, and (5) establishment of a fee for late payment of fees and authorization for the department to refuse service due to nonpayment of fees owed.

Specific authority is granted to the director for: (1) enforcement of custom farm slaughter identification requirements, (2) inspection exemption for private sales of less than 15 head of unbranded dairy cattle,(3) assessment of a fee for certificate of permit forms, and assessment of a fee for the Washington State Brand Book.

Language modifications are made to update and modernize the statute and to remove redundancy.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested January 23, 1998.

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