

SENATE BILL REPORT

ESSB 5866

As Passed Senate, March 15, 1999

Title: An act relating to eliminating component registration of fertilizer products.

Brief Description: Eliminating component registration of fertilizer products.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Environmental Quality & Water Resources (originally sponsored by Senators Fraser, Prentice, Kline and Kohl-Welles; by request of Department of Agriculture).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Environmental Quality & Water Resources: 2/23/99, 3/2/99 [DPS, DNPS].

Passed Senate, 3/15/99, 44-2.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY & WATER RESOURCES

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5866 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Fraser, Chair; Eide, Vice Chair; Jacobsen, McAuliffe and Swecker.

Minority Report: Do not pass substitute.

Signed by Senators Honeyford and Morton.

Staff: Richard Rodger (786-7461)

Background: Commercial fertilizers distributed in the state must be registered with the state Department of Agriculture. The application for registration must identify the fertilizer components and verify that the components have been registered. If a component has not been registered, then the application must include the concentration of each metal for which state standards have been established in the fertilizer component.

Commercial fertilizers must be labeled. After July 1, 1999, the label must state that information on the components of the product are available on the state's Internet website.

Summary of Bill: When registering a fertilizer, the applicant must report the concentration of specified metals contained in the product. Component registration of fertilizers is eliminated.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect on July 1, 1999.

Testimony For: This bill is designed to address problems identified in the implementation of the fertilizer regulation act passed last year. It does so by eliminating the option of registering a fertilizer by component. Component registration delays the process because each component is registered separately and one product may contain 20 or more registered components. Further, component registration does not provide consumers with information regarding the total metal content in a product.

Testimony Against: This bill will complicate the problem. It pushes the registration down the distribution stream and increases the number of people who will have to register. It will require manufacturers to reprint all their packaging again this year.

Testified: Mary Beth Lange, Ted Maxwell, Dept. of Agriculture (pro); Jon Stier, WashPIRG; Dan Coyne, Far West Fertilizer (con); Frank J. Warnke, Scotts (con).

House Amendment(s): The requirement that concentrations of metals be identified does not apply to: (1) anhydrous ammonia, a solution derived solely from dissolving ammonia in water if it is not from a waste-derived fertilizer; (2) a customer-formula fertilizer containing only registered commercial fertilizers; or (3) a packaged commercial fertilizer, the plant nutrient content of which is present in the form of a single chemical compound that is registered as a fertilizer.