

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 2710

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Labor, Commerce & Financial Institutions, February 28, 2002

Title: An act relating to the halal food consumer protection act.

Brief Description: Applying the consumer protection act to the sale of halal food products.

Sponsors: House Committee on Commerce & Labor (originally sponsored by Representatives Van Luven, Veloria, Esser, Tokuda, Santos, Cooper, Morell and Nixon).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Labor, Commerce & Financial Institutions: 2/27/02, 2/28/02 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON LABOR, COMMERCE & FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Prentice, Chair; Keiser, Vice Chair; Benton, Deccio, Fairley, Franklin, Gardner, Hochstatter, Honeyford, Rasmussen, Regala and Winsley.

Staff: Elizabeth Mitchell (786-7430)

Background: Halal food products are those foods prepared, processed, manufactured, maintained, and sold in strict compliance with the laws and customs of the Islamic faith.

Summary of Bill: A dealer whose inventory consists of more than 50 percent halal food products must: (1) label all non-halal foods in a way consumers can easily differentiate between food products that are halal and those not halal; and (2) maintain and make available upon request written information about the preparation of halal foods.

A "dealer" includes any business that advertises or represents itself as selling or maintaining halal food, including manufacturers, slaughterhouses, wholesalers, stores, restaurants, hotels, caterers, summer camps, nursing homes, freezer dealers, and food plan companies.

Beginning December 1, 2002, a dealer who sells food represented as halal, but which the dealer knows is not halal, is guilty of a gross misdemeanor. Such a sale also constitutes a violation of the Consumer Protection Act.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed, except sections 3 and 4, the civil and criminal penalties, which take effect December 1, 2002.

Testimony For: The penalties in the bill are the same as penalties for violating kosher food laws. Many people consume halal food products, and they deserve the consumer protection this bill provides.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: N. S. Hussain, Old Farm Market; Ali-Salaam Mahmoud, The Institute of Service Leadership and Management.