

SENATE BILL REPORT

SSB 5880

As Passed Senate, March 13, 2001

Title: An act relating to a forest products commission.

Brief Description: Creating a forest products commission.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Jacobsen, Oke, T. Sheldon, Morton, Stevens and Rasmussen).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Natural Resources, Parks & Shorelines: 2/22/01, 2/26/01 [DPS].
Ways & Means: 3/7/01 [w/oRec].
Passed Senate: 3/13/01, 49-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES, PARKS & SHORELINES

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5880 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Jacobsen, Chair; Spanel, Vice Chair; Constantine, Hargrove, McDonald, Morton, Oke, Snyder and Stevens.

Staff: Vic Moon (786-7469)

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Majority Report: That it be referred without recommendation.

Signed by Senators Brown, Chair; Constantine, Vice Chair; Fairley, Vice Chair; Fraser, Hewitt, Kohl-Welles, Long, Parlette, Rasmussen, Regala, B. Sheldon, Snyder, Spanel and Winsley.

Staff: Richard Ramsey (786-7412)

Background: The state of Washington has 26 commodity commissions ranging from apples to wheat and wine. All of the commissions in Washington are self-funded and are state supported. The commissions are created to promote and market products, to conduct research and to educate the public on the use of the product. Many of the western states use commodity commissions in this fashion. California, Oregon, Montana and Idaho all have commodity commissions. Idaho, Oregon and California have commodity commissions for forest products which were established in the 1990s.

Summary of Bill: A Washington Forest Products Commission is authorized. The establishment of the Washington Forest Products Commission requires a referendum vote of the potential members and the vote is conducted by the Department of Agriculture. There is a requirement that 40 percent of eligible members participate to validate any vote. There

are requirements which must be met to ensure passage: at least 51 percent of the members and 61 percent of the volume must approve or 65 percent of the members and 51 percent of the volume. The commission may be disbanded by the same method as it is created. The Department of Natural Resources is not eligible for membership or participation in the commission.

Timber harvesters cutting an excess of two million board feet and paying timber taxes in any four consecutive quarters automatically become members of the commission. Members are required to pay fees invoiced quarterly by the commission to support the commission's programs. The commission is given authority to adjust fees within a range established from 45 cents to 90 cents per million board feet of lumber. The increase is subject to a referendum vote of members of the commission. The commission is governed by the members of the commission and an executive board which is based on regional and production criteria. Six members are from western Washington and two members are from eastern Washington; one member is elected statewide. Board members are elected to staggered four-year terms. Members of the board must be over 21 years old and engaged in the production of forest products. No corporation may have more than one elected representative on the commission.

A severability clause is included.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available (on original bill).

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

Testimony For: A wood products commission has helped the industry in California and other states.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: Bill Garvin, WFPA; Steve Tveit, Boise Cascade; Paul Barnum, Weyerhaeuser; Bill Pickell, WA Contract Loggers Assn.; Bruce Mackey, DNR.