

SENATE BILL REPORT

SJM 8029

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Agriculture & International Trade, January 25, 2002

Brief Description: Petitioning to end restrictions on trade with Cuba.

Sponsors: Senators Kohl-Welles, Rasmussen, Swecker, Hewitt, Sheahan, Prentice, Honeyford, Hargrove, Spanel, Hale, Brown, Snyder, Haugen, McAuliffe and Kline.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Agriculture & International Trade: 1/25/02 [DPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Majority Report: That Substitute Joint Memorial No. 8029 be substituted therefor, and the substitute joint memorial do pass.

Signed by Senators Rasmussen, Chair; Shin, Vice Chair; Parlette, Sheahan, Snyder, Spanel and Swecker.

Staff: Bob Lee (786-7404)

Background: In 2000, Congress enacted the Trade Sanction Reform and Export Enhancement Act to liberalize United States' sanctions on exports of agricultural products to Cuba. Following recent hurricanes, some initial food shipments were made from the United States to Cuba. However, continuing United States' restrictions limits full access to the Cuban markets.

Summary of Substitute Bill: Congress and the President of the United States are requested to end restrictions on trade of agricultural products with Cuba.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The substitute bill provides that the request to end the restrictions on sales from the United States to Cuba apply specifically to agricultural products.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Testimony For: Many countries, including Canada, Spain, Germany and Italy, trade with and participate in business ventures in Cuba. The U.S. trade sanctions on Cuba were imposed in 1961. In 2000, Congress enacted the Trade Sanction Reform and Export Enhancement Act that allows greater export of agricultural products to Cuba but limitations to full access continue. Cuba's population is in need of food, medicine and humanitarian aid and the U.S. could be the supplier. The state of Washington's economy would benefit from being able to expand exports of agricultural products to Cuba.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Senator Kohl-Welles, prime sponsor (pro); Linda Johnson, Farm Bureau (pro); Jim Halstrom, WA State Horticultural Assn. (pro); Mike Kayser (pro); Paul Thomas, Oneonte Trading Corp (pro); Janet Cleister, WSDA (pro).