

VETO MESSAGE ON SB 6471

March 14, 2002

To the Honorable President and Members,
The Senate of the State of Washington
Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am returning herewith, without my approval as to subsection 3, Senate Bill No. 6471 entitled:

"AN ACT Relating to labeling of agricultural products by place of origin;"

Senate Bill No. 6471 requires grocery stores or other businesses offering fresh fruit and vegetables to either display a placard near the produce stating if it was "Grown in the United States" or "Grown in Washington," or to label each piece of produce individually. Subsection 3 of the bill would have allowed a retailer failing to do so to be fined up to \$250 on the second violation and up to \$1000 on the third violation in a calendar year.

I agree with the intent of the bill, which is to reveal the origin of produce to consumers. However, the penalties established in subsection 3 of the bill are excessive. Subsection 3 would normally be a separate section, and even refers to itself as a section. For these and other reasons, it is subject to veto.

For these reasons, I have vetoed subsection 3 of Senate Bill No. 6471.

With the exception of subsection 3, Senate Bill No. 6471 is approved.

Respectfully submitted,
Gary Locke
Governor