
Appropriations Committee

SSB 5169

Brief Description: Authorizing unspent biotoxin testing and monitoring funds to carry over to future biennia.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Hargrove and Shin).

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Authorizes the Department of Health (DOH) and the University of Washington (UW) to carry forward unspent biotoxin and monitoring funds. The DOH and UW are also required to provide an annual letter to the Legislature on the status of expenditures.

Hearing Date: 3/21/05

Staff: Alicia Paatsch (786-7178).

Background:

To ensure the health of consumers, the Department of Health's (DOH) Environmental Health program conducts testing and monitoring of paralytic and amnesic poisons (biotoxins) in the recreational shellfish fisheries. In the event dangerous levels of toxins are detected, the DOH has authorization to close shellfish beds and beaches.

The Olympic Region Harmful Algal Bloom (ORHAB) monitoring program is a collaboration of government, academia, businesses, and tribes established to study harmful algal blooms on the Washington coast. The program is based in the Olympic Natural Resources Center and administered by the University of Washington.

The 2003 Legislature authorized the increase of shellfish license fees to cover the cost of shellfish testing and algal bloom monitoring through an assessment of various surcharges.

The Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) is currently authorized by statute to collect the following surcharges:

- \$3 from the sale of resident and non-resident shellfish and seaweed licenses;
- \$2 on resident and non-resident adult combination licenses;
- \$2 on annual resident and nonresident razor clam licenses; and
- \$1 for the three-day razor clam license.

Amounts collected must be deposited in the general fund-local account managed by the DOH, except \$150,000 per year which is deposited into the general fund-local account managed by the

University of Washington (UW). Amounts in excess of the annual costs of the DOH recreational shellfish testing and monitoring programs are transferred to the state general fund.

Summary of Bill:

This bill clarifies that the UW's \$150,000 annual deposit can carry over into ensuing biennia rather than be transferred to the state general fund.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on March 17, 2005.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.