

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6375

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Agriculture & Rural Economic Development, January 19, 2006

Title: An act relating to animal identification.

Brief Description: Creating an advisory committee to evaluate animal identification programs.

Sponsors: Senators Rasmussen, Schoesler, Jacobsen, Honeyford, Shin, Morton and Delvin.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Agriculture & Rural Economic Development: 1/17/06, 1/19/06 [DPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6375 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Rasmussen, Chair; Shin, Vice Chair; Schoesler, Ranking Minority Member; Delvin, Jacobsen, Morton and Sheldon.

Staff: Bob Lee (786-7404)

Background: The National Animal Identification System is being designed by the United States Department of Agriculture with the goal of having the capability to identify all animal premises and animals that had direct contact with specific foreign or domestic animal diseases within 48 hours of discovery. The involved species include cattle, swine, sheep, goats, poultry, buffalo, ostrich, emu, horses, llamas, alpacas, and aquaculture.

The program is anticipated to be developed so that all premises and animals will be registered by January 2008, and animal movement reporting is to be fully implemented in 2009. Programs that fit the unique characteristics of each species are being developed. Some species will involve the identification of individual animals while other species will involve the identification as a group. Radio frequency identification tags or implants are anticipated to be used for specific species.

Each state will have specific responsibilities to develop and implement specific components of the system including developing and maintaining data bases. The Department of Agriculture (Department) is the coordinating entity for this program in Washington State.

Summary of Substitute Bill: The Director of Agriculture is to convene an advisory committee composed of representatives from the various segments of the cattle industry that will be involved in the implementation of the state's component of the national animal disease identification program. In making these appointments, the director is to consult with organizations that represent the affected segments.

The advisory committee is to evaluate the requirements of the federal program, examine approaches being taken in other states, and evaluate demonstration projects, at least two facilities, that handle a large number of animals.

The advisory committee must develop a plan for implementation that includes recommended funding amounts and sources and must consult with the Office of Financial Management during the formulation of the funding proposal.

The Department must submit a written report of the activities and recommendations of the advisory committee to the Legislature by December 1, 2006.

The advisory committee expires on July 1, 2007.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The substitute bill reduces the scope of required participants from the various segments of the livestock industry to the various segments of the cattle industry. Added is the evaluation of demonstration projects at two or more facilities that handle large numbers of animals such as public livestock markets and feedlots. Instead of an implementation plan, the advisory committee is to provide a recommendation on how the federal requirements should be implemented in Washington.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: Yes.

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

Testimony For: With the 2008 and 2009 deadlines, there isn't much time to get this new system into place. Because each livestock segment will have its own system that then fits into the overall system, all the affected industry segments should have an opportunity to be actively involved. The cattle industry has the earliest deadlines so the advisory committee should include all segments of this industry. This system needs to look not only at the personnel and equipment needs at the agencies, but also at markets, feedlots, plants, and farms.

Testimony Against: None.

Who Testified: PRO: Jay Gordon, Washington Dairy Federation; Ed Field, Washington Cattle Feeders Association; Jack Field, Washington Cattlemen's Association; Rick Nelson; Jim Sizemore.