

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5002

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Agriculture & Rural Economic Development, February 3, 2009

Title: An act relating to heritage livestock and poultry breeds.

Brief Description: Creating the Washington heritage livestock and poultry breed recognition program.

Sponsors: Senators Jacobsen and Swecker.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Agriculture & Rural Economic Development: 1/19/09, 2/03/09 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Hatfield, Chair; Ranker, Vice Chair; Schoesler, Ranking Minority Member; Becker, Haugen, Morton and Shin.

Staff: Bob Lee (786-7404)

Background: As some specialized breeds of livestock and poultry have become favored in modern food production systems, competitive market forces have caused other breeds to diminish or become extinct.

There is interest in establishing a procedure to provide recognition to owners of animals of rare and diminishing breeds of livestock. A goal of the recognition program is to provide owners an incentive to continue rearing these animals by increasing public awareness of these animal breeds.

Summary of Bill: A Washington Heritage Livestock and Poultry Breed Recognition Program is created in the Department of Archeology and Historic Preservation (department). To apply for recognition, the animal owner may submit an application to the department that includes the history of the animal breed, photos of the animals, a brief history of the breed's origin, and any interesting or unique characteristics.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

To assist with the determination of whether a breed qualifies as a heritage breed, the department may use the conservation priority list established by the American Livestock Breeds Conservancy (ALBC). For livestock breeds that are not on the ALBC list, the owner may submit supplemental information regarding the breed's status as a rare or diminishing breed for consideration by the department for possible designation.

The department must periodically issue recognition awards to the owners of animals and is to maintain a website that include those animals. The program expires on July 1, 2011.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: In England, they have farms that maintain many of the old breeds of livestock because they have unusual characteristics and have a policy to preserve the genetics of these animal species. The goal of this recognition program is to help people who produce these rare and diminishing breeds to gain additional publicity in hopes that chefs, retailers, and consumers will buy these animals and to reward producers for maintaining the genetics.

OTHER: It is unknown what level of participation there will be so the department is assuming it will take up to one-half an FTE to set up the program and to maintain the website.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Jacobsen, prime sponsor; Jack Field, Washington Cattlemen's Association.

OTHER: Allyson Brooke, Department of Archeology and Historic Preservation.