
**Agriculture & Natural Resources
Committee**

ESJM 8050

Brief Description: Informing Congress of Washington's expertise in animal disease.

Sponsors: Senators Sheahan and Rasmussen.

Brief Summary of Engrossed Bill

- Requests that the Congress and the U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) be aware of the expertise at Washington State University (WSU) and the institution's ability to fulfill needs on projects related to transmissible spongiform encephalopathies.

Hearing Date: 2/25/04

Staff: Kenneth Hirst (786-7105).

Background:

The Washington Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory (WADDL) was created in 1974. In 1979, the WADDL was the first laboratory in the western U. S. to be fully accredited as a service laboratory by the American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians. Its main laboratory is located on the Pullman campus of WSU; it also has an Avian Health Laboratory at WSU-Puyallup. It provides laboratory services in bacteriology, parasitology, pathology, serology and virology. The laboratory responds to requests from all parts of the state and most of Idaho. It also responds to requests from elsewhere in the Pacific Northwest and from Alaska and Hawaii.

The WADDL is a founding member of the National Animal Health Laboratory Network, a network of 12 regional laboratories responsible for surveillance for and responding to exotic disease outbreaks affecting livestock.

In 1998, WSU and USDA researchers announced the development of a test for scrapie in live sheep (the third eyelid test), which is the only test for a live animal that has been developed for a transmissible spongiform encephalopathy (TSE).

Summary of Bill:

The Congress and the USDA are asked to be fully aware of the current expertise at the WADDL and College of Veterinary Medicine at WSU and the institution's ability to fulfill needs on projects related to TSEs, including the ability to:

- develop a bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) test for live cattle, which will require a large animal bio-containment facility with an estimated cost of \$25 million;
- conduct an itemized list of enhanced TSE research projects costing approximately \$2 million; or
- administer a quick surveillance BSE testing program for the state or the region that would require federal authorization with the overall cost dependent upon the number of tests to be performed each year.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.