

FINAL BILL REPORT

SSB 5169

C 416 L 05

Synopsis as Enacted

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).

Senate Committee on Ways & Means
House Committee on Appropriations

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 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. 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 must be transferred to the state general fund.

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

- \$3.00 surcharge from the sale of resident and non-resident shellfish and seaweed licenses;
- \$2.00 surcharge on resident and non-resident adult combination licenses;
- \$2.00 surcharge on annual resident and nonresident razor clam licenses; and
- \$1.00 surcharge for the three-day razor clam license.

Summary: This bill clarifies that the University of Washington's (UW) \$150,000 annual appropriation can carry over into ensuing biennia rather than transferred to the state general fund and authorizes the Department of Health (DOH) to carry forward its unspent biotoxin and monitoring funds. The DOH and the UW are required to provide an annual letter to the legislature on the status of expenditures.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate 46 0

House 92 0 (House amended)
Senate 34 5 (Senate concurred)

Effective: May 11, 2005