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**Health Care & Wellness Committee**

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**E2SSB 6529**

**Brief Description:** Establishing a pesticide application safety work group.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Saldaña, Ranker, Cleveland, Rolfes, Van De Wege, Miloscia, Chase, Conway, McCoy, Hunt, Keiser and Hasegawa).

**Brief Summary of Engrossed Second Substitute Bill**

- Establishes a work group to develop recommendations for improving the safety of pesticide applications.

**Hearing Date:** 2/21/18

**Staff:** Chris Blake (786-7392).

**Background:**

The Department of Agriculture (WSDA) administers and enforces the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act, as well as the state Pesticide Control Act and Pesticide Application Act. Pursuant to these laws, pesticides sold in Washington must be registered with the WSDA and applicators, operators, consultants, dealers, and commercial pesticide application equipment must be licensed. The WSDA also conducts pesticide safety training directly with the farmworkers. In addition, the WSDA conducts inspections of pesticide applicators, dealers, and producers, and conducts investigations of alleged misuse of pesticides.

The Department of Health (DOH) tracks and investigates pesticide-related illnesses in both home and occupational settings. In cases of suspected human pesticide poisoning that are determined to be an emergency, the DOH may assume control of the property and dispose of hazardous substances. Pesticide poisoning is a notifiable condition that must be reported directly to the DOH within three business days of a health care provider's diagnosis or suspected diagnosis. The pesticide poisoning must be reported immediately if it results in hospitalization or death, or is determined to be associated with a cluster.

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*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.*

**Summary of Bill:**

The Department of Health (DOH) and the Department of Agriculture (WSDA) must establish a work group to develop recommendations for improving the safety of pesticide applications. The work group must review laws regulating pesticide safety and application, arrange a presentation on new pesticide application technologies and review other technologies used to increase pesticide application safety, review the structure of the former Pesticide Incident Reporting and Tracking Review Panel and determine whether a similar group should be established, and review current data and reports from agencies in Washington and other states that may be helpful in developing strategies to improve pesticide application safety.

The work group includes a member and an alternate from each caucus of both chambers of the Legislature, and one representative each from the WSDA, the DOH, the Department of Labor and Industries, the Department of Natural Resources, and the Commission on Hispanic Affairs. The Secretary of the DOH and the Secretary of the WSDA may invite others to participate in an advisory capacity, including representatives of producers of crops that use airblast sprayers, producers of crops that use fumigation, producers or crops that use aerial applications, timber producers, aerial applicators or pilots, farmworkers, labor, children's health advocates, environmental interests, the University of Washington, and Washington State University.

By November 1, 2018, the work group must submit a report to the Governor and the appropriate legislative committees that includes findings, recommendations, and draft legislation.

Legislative findings are made related to the interest in minimizing human exposure to pesticide and the reduction in such exposure through scientific advancements, ongoing education and training, use of safety equipment, improved technologies, and monitoring and regulation. In addition, it is recognized that a 2014 work group made gains in reducing pesticide drift exposure and that collaboration between state agencies and the farming community can further minimize exposure to pesticide drift.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available. New fiscal note requested on February 15, 2018.

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