
HOUSE BILL 1552

State of Washington

65th Legislature

2017 Regular Session

By Representatives Tarleton, Sells, McBride, Farrell, Slatter, Hudgins, Gregerson, Santos, Peterson, Orwall, Riccelli, Pollet, Dolan, Doglio, Fitzgibbon, Goodman, Macri, Tharinger, Sawyer, and Senn

Read first time 01/23/17. Referred to Committee on Technology & Economic Development.

1 AN ACT Relating to fostering economic growth in Washington by
2 supporting the in-state production, processing, and distribution of
3 food supply; creating new sections; and providing an expiration date.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature recognizes the
6 important role of food production, processing, and distribution
7 within the state in promoting food security, community resilience,
8 and economic opportunity in Washington. Washington residents spend
9 more than forty-five billion dollars per year on food, but the vast
10 majority of this money is spent on food that is grown and processed
11 outside of the state. Keeping food dollars in Washington through
12 improvements in local food production, processing, and distribution
13 could result in widespread benefits, including increased employment
14 and economic growth throughout the farm and food economies. The
15 legislature further finds that supporting the local food industry is
16 critical to building and sustaining a diverse and resilient economy
17 in Washington.

18 (2) It is the intent of the legislature to engage in a
19 collaborative process with local farmers, food processors, and food
20 distributors to evaluate changes in state and local policies and the
21 funding that is needed to foster resilience and growth in the local

1 food sector. The legislature intends to develop and implement an
2 economic development strategy to promote a more dependable, healthy
3 local food supply and expand economic opportunities for Washington
4 food producers, processors, and distributors. The legislature intends
5 the economic benefits of these efforts to support and be a part of a
6 greater food supply network linking small local farms, schools,
7 farmers markets, food banks, shelters, and many other areas touched
8 by issues surrounding fresh food access.

9 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1) The Washington State University center
10 for sustaining agriculture and natural resources must study the
11 economic development of the local food system in Washington.

12 (2)(a) The study must identify a ten-year plan for expansion of
13 the state's food production, processing, and distribution capacity
14 by:

15 (i) Evaluating the state's capacity to produce a variety of food
16 products given the state's environment and climate;

17 (ii) Assessing a potential market demand for an increased local
18 food supply, through surveys of processors, distributors, and buyers;

19 (iii) Identifying infrastructure needs to support the local food
20 industry, including processing capacity and transportation networks;

21 (iv) Assessing the institutional capacity of state agencies and
22 organizations to foster economic growth in the food sector;

23 (v) Evaluating changes in state planning, permitting,
24 environmental regulation, and financing to enhance food production,
25 processing, and distribution; and

26 (vi) Identifying legislative actions needed to implement food
27 system improvements.

28 (b) The recommendations of the study must include short and long-
29 term action plans for the legislature to support and sustain the
30 local food sector in Washington. The recommendations of the study may
31 include specific legislative approaches, such as changes in state
32 law, and nonlegislative approaches, such as action plans for state
33 agencies and local governments.

34 (3) Washington State University must form an advisory committee
35 to provide technical information, advice, and assistance in
36 completing the study. The advisory committee must include
37 representatives of farm organizations, food processors, food
38 distributors, restaurateurs, food service directors, and local food
39 advocacy organizations.

1 (4) Washington State University must submit to the governor and
2 the appropriate committees of the legislature a final study report
3 with findings and recommendations by November 30, 2018, and in
4 compliance with RCW 43.01.036.

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** This act expires December 31, 2018.

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