

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5664

As of February 13, 2023

Title: An act relating to salmon labeling for human consumption.

Brief Description: Concerning salmon labeling for human consumption.

Sponsors: Senators McCune, Wilson, J., Holy, Fortunato, Dozier, Wagoner, Warnick, Padden, Keiser, Nobles, Saldaña, Torres and Wellman.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Agriculture, Water, Natural Resources & Parks: 2/13/23.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Modifies labeling requirements for salmon offered for sale including identifying the species of salmon by its common name, if it is wild-caught, and the region or waterbody where the salmon was caught.
- Establishes penalties for any person selling or displaying for sale at retail salmon without having the package or container bear a label easily readable to a customer identifying the species of salmon by its common name.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, WATER, NATURAL RESOURCES & PARKS

Staff: Jeff Olsen (786-7428)

Background: It is unlawful to knowingly sell or offer for sale at wholesale or retail any fresh, frozen, or processed salmon without identifying private sector cultured aquatic salmon or salmon products as farm-raised salmon, or identifying commercially caught salmon or salmon products as commercially caught salmon. Identification must be made to the buyer at the point of sale such that the buyer can make an informed purchasing decision

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

for their protection, health, and safety.

A violation of the labeling requirements constitutes misbranding, and is punishable as a misdemeanor, gross misdemeanor, or felony depending on the fair market value of the fish or shellfish involved in the violation.

Summary of Bill: It is unlawful to knowingly sell or offer for sale at wholesale or retail any fresh, frozen, or processed salmon without identifying private sector cultured aquatic salmon or salmon products as farm-raised salmon or wild caught. Farm-raised salmon must also identify whether any red dye is used, and the state, province, or foreign country where it was farm-raised. Wild-caught salmon must identify the species of salmon by its common name, and the state, province, foreign country, or waterbody where it was commercially caught.

It is unlawful for any person to sell at retail or display for sale at retail any salmon without having the package or container in which the salmon is sold bear a label easily readable to a customer identifying the species of salmon by its common name.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: Consumers want to know what is in the food they purchase. Farm-raised salmon may be raised with chemicals or red dye. This is a truth in consumer bill that would provide additional information about where the salmon you are purchasing comes from. Many consumers want to eat wild-caught salmon. Most farm-raised salmon comes from either Canada or Chile. Federal labeling laws are not being enforced.

OTHER: There are federal regulations for labeling, and they typically are managed at the wholesale level. This bill would penalize a retailer for labels that is attached by a wholesaler. There are concerns about conformity with federal regulations. “Color added” is usually the language required in labeling rather than “red dye.”

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Jim McCune, Prime Sponsor.

OTHER: Katie Beeson, Washington Food Industry Association (WFIA).

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.