
SENATE BILL 5117

State of Washington

69th Legislature

2025 Regular Session

By Senator Muzzall

Prefiled 12/26/24.

1 AN ACT Relating to protecting agriculture; and adding a new
2 chapter to Title 43 RCW.

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

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature declares that it is
5 the continuing policy of the state of Washington, in cooperation with
6 federal and local governments and other concerned public and private
7 organizations, to use all practicable means and measures, including
8 financial and technical assistance, in a manner calculated to: (a)
9 Promote a stable food supply by maintaining a healthy agricultural
10 economy in Washington state; and (b) ensure that the regulatory
11 environment does not adversely affect the ability of Washington's
12 farmers to continue to grow and sell their products to feed citizens
13 of Washington state and the world.

14 (2) In order to carry out the policy set forth in this chapter,
15 it is the continuing responsibility of the state of Washington and
16 all agencies of the state to use all practicable means, consistent
17 with other essential considerations of state policy, to improve and
18 coordinate plans, functions, programs, and resources in order to:

19 (a) Promote agriculture while protecting public health and
20 welfare;

1 (b) Provide opportunities for farmers and ranchers to utilize
2 agricultural land to produce agricultural products;

3 (c) Aid farmers and landowners in utilizing the land for the best
4 combination of production, habitat, carbon sequestration, and any
5 combination of commercial and conservation activities; and

6 (d) Preserve important historical, cultural, and natural aspects
7 of our national heritage of agriculture.

8 (3) The legislature authorizes and directs that, to the fullest
9 extent possible, the policies, regulations, and laws of the state of
10 Washington shall be interpreted and administered in accordance with
11 the policies set forth in this chapter and that all branches of
12 government of this state, including state agencies, municipal and
13 public corporations, and counties shall:

14 (a) Utilize a systematic, interdisciplinary approach to ensure
15 the integrated use of the natural and social sciences in planning and
16 decision making with respect to issues that have an impact on the
17 agricultural economy in Washington state;

18 (b) Identify and develop methods and procedures, in consultation
19 with the department of agriculture and the state conservation
20 commission, which will ensure that presently unquantified values will
21 be given appropriate consideration in decision making, along with
22 economic and technical considerations;

23 (c) (i) Include in every recommendation or report on proposals for
24 legislation and other major actions significantly affecting
25 agriculture, a detailed statement by the responsible official
26 regarding:

27 (A) The economic impact of the proposed action on the conduct of
28 agriculture in Washington;

29 (B) Any adverse effects that cannot be avoided should the
30 proposal be implemented;

31 (C) Alternatives to the proposed action;

32 (D) The relationship between local short-term uses of the
33 environment and the maintenance and enhancement of long-term
34 agricultural productivity; and

35 (E) Any irreversible and irretrievable commitments of resources
36 that would be involved in the proposed action should it be
37 implemented;

38 (ii) Prior to making any detailed statement, the responsible
39 official shall consult with and obtain the comments of any public

1 agency that has jurisdiction by law or special expertise with respect
2 to any impact on agriculture involved; and

3 (e) Study, develop, and describe appropriate alternatives to
4 recommended courses of action in any proposal that involves
5 unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available
6 resources.

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1)(a) The director of financial
8 management or the director's designee, in cooperation with
9 appropriate legislative committees and legislative staff, must
10 establish a mechanism for the determination of the fiscal impact of
11 proposed legislation which, if enacted into law, would directly or
12 indirectly increase or decrease regulatory costs incurred by entities
13 engaged in agriculture. The office of financial management shall,
14 when requested by a member of the state legislature, report in
15 writing as to the fiscal impact and the report may be known as a
16 fiscal note.

17 (b) For purposes of this subsection, "entities engaged in
18 agriculture" includes entities registered with the office of the
19 secretary of state as engaged in the manufacturing, production, or
20 processing of agricultural products.

21 (2) Fiscal notes must indicate by fiscal year the total impact on
22 the agricultural economy for the first two years the legislation
23 would be in effect and also a cumulative six-year forecast of the
24 fiscal impact. Where feasible and applicable, the fiscal note must
25 also indicate the fiscal impact on each industry or a representative
26 sampling of the industry broadly.

27 (3) A fiscal note must be provided only upon request of a member
28 of the state legislature. A request for a fiscal note on legislation
29 is considered to be a continuing request for a fiscal note on any
30 formal alteration of the legislation in the form of an amendment to
31 the legislation that are adopted by a committee or a chamber of the
32 legislature or a substitute version of the legislation that is
33 adopted by a committee and preparation of the fiscal note on the
34 prior version of the legislation must stop, unless the legislator
35 requesting the fiscal note specifies otherwise or the altered version
36 is first adopted or enacted in the last week of a legislative
37 session.

38 (4) Fiscal notes must be completed within one week of the request
39 unless an extended time period is authorized by the requesting

1 legislator. In the event a fiscal note has not been completed within
2 one week of a request, a daily report must be prepared for the
3 requesting legislator by the director of financial management. The
4 daily report must summarize the progress in preparing the fiscal
5 note. If the request is referred to the director of commerce, the
6 daily report must also include the date and time such a referral is
7 made.

8 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** (1)(a) Beginning August 1, 2025, an agency
9 considering a significant agency action must conduct an assessment in
10 accordance with this chapter to inform and support the agency's
11 consideration of impacts on agricultural producers and communities
12 that rely on agriculture. The assessment performed by the agency is
13 intended to assist the agency in identifying issues and decisions
14 that impact agriculture in order to reduce economic harms to the
15 agricultural economy and the communities that rely on it.

16 (b) An agency must aspire to complete the assessment for a
17 significant agency action without delaying the completion of the
18 underlying agency action.

19 (2) By August 1, 2025, and periodically thereafter, after an
20 opportunity for public comment on its determinations, each covered
21 agency must:

22 (a) Publish on its website the types of agency actions that the
23 agency has determined are significant agency actions that require an
24 agricultural economic assessment under this section;

25 (b) Provide notification of the determination of the types of
26 significant agency actions in the Washington State Register; and

27 (c) Prepare an agricultural economic assessment when considering
28 a listed action, after publication of the list of any additional
29 significant agency actions identified under (a) of this subsection.

30 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** This chapter may be known and cited as the
31 food economics, availability, and security over time (FEAST) act.

32 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** Sections 1 through 4 of this act
33 constitute a new chapter in Title 43 RCW.

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