

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1322

*As Reported By House Committee on:
Fisheries & Wildlife*

Title: An act relating to aquatic animal health.

Brief Description: Authorizing the development of aquatic animal diagnostic, certification, and extension services and curricula.

Sponsor(s): Representatives R. King, Rayburn, Nealey, Basich, McLean, Hochstatter, Fuhrman, Bowman, Sheldon, Chandler, Morris, Ballard, Dorn and Tate.

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Fisheries & Wildlife, February 14, 1991, DPA.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
FISHERIES & WILDLIFE**

Majority Report: *Do pass as amended.* Signed by 11 members: Representatives R. King, Chair; Morris, Vice Chair; Wilson, Ranking Minority Member; Fuhrman, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Basich; Cole; Haugen; Hochstatter; Orr; Padden; and Spanel.

Staff: Keitlyn Watson (786-7310).

Background: Fish that are imported or transferred between aquaculture facilities or hatcheries within the state of Washington or between the state of Washington and other states or countries must be certified to be free of certain diseases, including VHS and whirling disease. Several diagnostic laboratories and certification services are available to state, federal, and private facilities. Availability of services to private aquaculturists is more limited than services to public hatcheries and rearing facilities. Certification of stocks must be conducted by a Title 50 inspector certified by the U.S. Department of the Interior or by the American Fisheries Society (AFS). Although there is no fish health inspection program available in Washington at an institution of higher education, the University of Washington offers qualifying coursework for AFS certification as a Fish Health Inspector. Institutions in several other states have programs in fish health. Some programs are part of the veterinary curriculum.

Summary of Amended Bill: The Department of Agriculture is directed to contract with Washington State University to establish and operate an aquatic animal health diagnostic and extension laboratory and certification service at the Washington State University research and extension center at Puyallup. The certification standards shall meet existing state and federal standards. An appropriation of \$673,000 is made for the 1991-1993 biennium to the Department of Agriculture for this purpose.

Washington State University is directed to establish a training program in aquatic animal health and disease. They will do this in cooperation with the University of Washington. An appropriation of \$54,000 is made for the 1991-1993 biennium, to Washington State University, for the development of this training program.

Private contributions of funds or in kind services or facilities valued at \$27,000 must be made prior to expenditure of the appropriated funds.

Amended Bill Compared to Original Bill: The amended bill requires that existing state and federal standards for certification shall be met.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Appropriation: Yes.

Effective Date of Amended Bill: July 28, 1991.

Testimony For: The current diagnostic and certification services do not meet the needs of the aquaculture industry. Field diagnostics, in particular, are not available. Extension services are unavailable. Veterinary certification would add a disease management dimension to existing services. Employment opportunities would be created if a training program were established at Washington State University. A diagnostic and certification service would cause the aquaculture industry to grow. The service provided in this bill would improve the health of the fishery in Washington, in general. The Department of Agriculture should be the focal point for private aquaculture.

Testimony Against: None.

Witnesses: Jim Zimmerman, Trout Lodge, Inc. (in favor); Kristina Seabolt, Trout Lodge, Inc. (in favor); Brad Pruitt, Trout Unlimited (in favor); Kevin Amos, Department of Fisheries (in favor with concerns: current statutory authority of WDF should not be changed, current

certification standards by U.S. government and state of Washington should continue to be required); Terry Wright, Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission (in favor, with concerns: roles for participants in training program must be clearly spelled out in the bill); and Larry Ganders, Washington State University (in favor with concerns: timing is poor for both budgetary and program priority reasons).