

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1600

*As Reported By House Committee on:
Trade & Economic Development*

Title: An act relating to employment opportunities for federal timber impact areas.

Brief Description: Providing employment opportunities for certain timber workers.

Sponsor(s): Representatives Basich, Hargrove, Jones, Sheldon, Riley, P. Johnson, Bowman, Inslee, Morris, Brumsickle, Kremen, R. Johnson, H. Myers, Peery, Rayburn, Zellinsky, Jacobsen, Paris, G. Fisher, Roland, Phillips, Orr, Cooper, Rasmussen and Spanel.

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Trade & Economic Development, March 5, 1991, DPA.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
TRADE & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Majority Report: *Do pass as amended.* Signed by 11 members: Representatives Cantwell, Chair; Sheldon, Vice Chair; Forner, Ranking Minority Member; Betrozoff, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Ferguson; Kremen; Ludwig; Moyer; Rasmussen; Riley; and Roland.

Staff: Bill Watterson (786-7349).

Background: Timber harvest levels, particularly on federal lands, are expected to decrease significantly. This will adversely impact the state generally and timber communities specifically.

The estimated job losses resulting from the reduced harvest level vary significantly. The governor's office estimates the direct and indirect job losses at 20,000; the House Timber Task Force estimated the job losses at 26,000.

Training and retraining programs, most of which are administered by the state Department of Employment Security and funded through the federal Job Training Partnership Act, can benefit timber-dependent communities. An example of this is job dislocation assistance.

Summary of Amended Bill: The Counter-Cyclical Program is established to provide forest-related employment and job retraining assistance for dislocated timber workers residing in federal timber impact areas. The project is administered by the state Employment Security Department. The department shall notify dislocated timber workers of their eligibility for the program.

The Employment Security Department shall contract with the Department of Natural Resources to provide employment opportunities to not less than 200 program participants. Participants shall be employed in activities to improve the value of state lands and water resources. Participants shall not work more than 32 hours each week. Participants shall concurrently enroll in a career orientation program. The Employment Security Department shall provide at least eight hours of career counseling each week.

Amended Bill Compared to Original Bill: The \$9 hourly wage for program participants is deleted.

Fiscal Note: Requested February 8, 1991.

Appropriation: Yes.

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

Testimony For: The bill redresses the dislocated timber workers' need for employment and job retraining assistance in forest-related jobs.

Testimony Against: The bill conflicts with the constitutional management requirements of state trust lands and directs that Resource Management Cost Account funds be used for purposes that are not allowed.

Witnesses: Representative Bob Basich, Prime Sponsor; and Art Stearns, Department of Natural Resources (supports intent, but not in favor of bill).