

**SENATE BILL REPORT**

**ESHB 1856**

**AS OF JUNE 28, 1991**

**Brief Description:** Making major changes to the weights and measures statutes.

**SPONSORS:** House Committee on Revenue (originally sponsored by Representatives Wang and Holland; by request of Department of Agriculture and Office of Financial Management).

**Staff:** Terry Wilson (786-7715)

**BACKGROUND:**

The accuracy of weights and measures used in commerce is monitored by the Department of Agriculture. Weights and measures include all instruments and devices for weighing and measuring, including grocery store scales, gas pumps, taxi cab meters, and meat scales.

The Director of Agriculture is responsible for the accuracy of weights and measures. The standards by which weights and measures are tested and inspected are established by the National Bureau of Standards. These standards detail both the schedule for inspection and the testing procedure of weighing and measuring devices.

Cities over 50,000 in population are required to appoint a "city sealer" who tests and certifies weights and measures. City sealers are supervised by the Director of Agriculture. Funding for city weights and measures testing and inspection programs are provided by the city.

The state weights and measures program is funded by the state general fund. However, funds to support the testing of track scales, used in the weighing and measuring of rail cargo, are collected from track scale owners. The department may prescribe and collect fees to cover all costs for the inspection and testing of track scales.

**SUMMARY:**

The Department of Agriculture is directed to study the weights and measures program. The study shall include a determination of the appropriate level and form for the program and recommendations for an appropriate funding mechanism.

The Legislature intends to fund the weights and measures program from the general fund in fiscal year 1992 and thereafter based on the recommendations of the study.

**Appropriation:** none

**Revenue:** none

**Fiscal Note:** available