

FINAL BILL REPORT

SSB 6483

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SYNOPSIS AS ENACTED

Brief Description: Modifying provisions relating to weights and measures.

SPONSORS: Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Matson, Murray and Bluechel)

SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE & LABOR

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

BACKGROUND:

The Director of the Department of Agriculture is responsible for testing and certifying the accuracy of all weighing and measuring devices used in commerce in Washington State.

First class cities over 50,000 in population are required to appoint a "city sealer" who tests and certifies weights and measures within each of their respective jurisdictions. City sealers are authorized to work under the supervision of the director. Funding for city weights and measures testing and inspection programs is provided by the city.

The standards by which the director and city sealers may test weights and measures are established by the National Bureau of Standards. These standards detail both the schedule for inspection and the testing procedures for weighing and measuring devices.

The state weights and measures program is primarily supported by the state's 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:

All weighing and measuring instruments and devices are to be inspected and tested for accuracy at least once every two years by the Department of Agriculture or the city sealer.

The department is to establish biennial inspection and testing fees for each type or class of weighing or measuring instrument or device. The fees are to be set to cover the direct costs associated with the inspection or testing of the type or class. Before setting or changing fees, the department is to convene a task force to recommend the

appropriate level of fees. The task force is to be composed of a representative of the department, city sealers, service agents, service stations, grocery stores, retailers, food processors/dealers, oil heat dealers, the agricultural community, and liquid propane dealers. Devices found to be correct are subject only to one fee every two years unless the owner requests an inspection.

Fees are due 30 days after billing and are deposited into the weights and measures account established in the state treasury. Ten percent of the fees collected by city sealers are transmitted to the department for deposit in the account.

First class cities no longer are required to have a city sealer. City sealers are required to adopt the state fee schedule.

City field weights and measures standards and service agents weights and measures standards must be inspected and tested biennially.

Civil penalties are imposed for violations, and criminal penalties are eliminated.

The Office of Financial Management is to review the state's weights and measures program and report its findings to the Legislature by June 30, 1993. The office is to form a special task force with representation from government and industry to help with the review.

VOTES ON FINAL PASSAGE:

Senate	28	19
House	72	25

EFFECTIVE: July 1, 1992