

VETO MESSAGE ON HB 1910-S

April 23, 1999

To the Honorable Speaker and Members,

The House of Representatives of the State of Washington
Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am returning herewith, without my approval, Substitute House Bill No. 1910 entitled:

"AN ACT Relating to establishing logos for substances approved for use in the production, processing, and handling of organic food;"

Substitute House Bill No. 1910 would authorize products used in organic food production, certified by the Department of Agriculture, to be identified by a logo that may contain the state seal. Long standing state law prohibits use of the state seal in connection with any advertising, promotion or endorsement for any business, organization, product, service or article. The state has always taken great care to protect the dignity and sanctity of its seal, and has only allowed its use in connection with commercial products on the official certification logos of state agencies.

I am concerned that allowing the state seal to be used commercially on organic products " not as part of official state certification logos " would set a new precedent for widespread commercial use. The Secretary of State, who is charged with responsibility for our state seal, has raised grave concerns that this bill would be contrary to state policy, and could lead to degradation of our state seal.

The Department of Agriculture is currently in the process of adopting rules to create official certification logos for products used in organic food production. I will direct the Department to move forward as expeditiously as possible to complete the rulemaking, and to use reasonable efforts to assure that the logo is consistent with others in the organic products program. It is highly likely that the rulemaking process will be concluded within 30 days of the effective date of this bill, avoiding undue delay.

For these reasons I have vetoed Substitute House Bill No. 1910 in its entirety.

Respectfully submitted,
Gary Locke
Governor