

VETO MESSAGE ON SB 5619-S

May 17, 1999

To the Honorable President and Members,  
The Senate of the State of Washington  
Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am returning herewith, without my approval, Substitute Senate Bill No. 5619 entitled:

"AN ACT Relating to forest fire protection assessment;"

Substitute Senate Bill No. 5619 created a new mechanism for owners of multiple parcels of forested land, that would have allowed them to pay the correct fire protection assessment fee, without being required to over pay and apply later for a refund. The cumbersome payment mechanism is a problem that requires attention.

However, the mechanism in this bill is also flawed and could, in time, result in inaccurate assessments and a reduction in revenues for a program that is already deficient in funding. Both the overall revenue situation and the fee collection mechanism need to be considered together as part of a comprehensive package. By vetoing of this bill, it is my intention that this fee collection issue, and broader forest fire protection, prevention, and fee issues, will be dealt with in the next legislative session.

For these reasons I have vetoed Substitute Senate Bill No. 5619 in its entirety.

Respectfully submitted,  
Gary Locke  
Governor