

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SB 6465

As Reported by House Committee On:
Agriculture & Natural Resources

Title: An act relating to extending the expiration date of the dairy inspection program assessment.

Brief Description: Extending the expiration date of the dairy inspection program assessment.

Sponsors: Senators Swecker and Rasmussen.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Agriculture & Natural Resources: 2/24/04, 2/25/04 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Extends by five years the expiration date for an assessment on milk processing.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 13 members: Representatives Linville, Chair; Rockefeller, Vice Chair; Schoesler, Ranking Minority Member; Holmquist, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Kristiansen, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Chandler, Eickmeyer, Grant, Hunt, McDermott, Orcutt, Quall and Sump.

Staff: Kenneth Hirst (786-7105).

Background:

An assessment is levied on all milk processed in this state. It is not to exceed 0.54 cents per hundredweight. The amount of the assessment is to be set by the Director of Agriculture by rule at an amount that, with General Fund monies, supports an inspection program that maintains compliance with the federal Pasteurized Milk Ordinance (PMO). The assessment is levied on the operator of the first milk processing plant receiving the milk for processing; however, it is not paid for any month in which the assessment for a plant is less than \$20 for that month.

Revenues from the assessment are deposited in the Dairy Inspection Account in the Agricultural Local Fund. The funds may be used only to provide inspection services to the dairy industry.

The assessment expires June 30, 2005.

Summary of Bill:

The expiration date for the milk processing assessment is extended to June 30, 2010.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: About 10 years ago, the state's inspection program in support of the PMO fell behind. When the federal government made its inspections, it found a lot of shortcomings. This is an assessment the industry requested to provide an adequate state inspection system. It will expire soon; extending the expiration date is hugely important to the dairy industry.

Testimony Against: None.

Persons Testifying: Senator Rasmussen, co-sponsor; and Chris Cheney, Washington State Dairy Federation.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.