

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6237

As Passed Senate, February 12, 2004

Title: An act relating to providing nonagricultural commercial and retail uses that support and sustain agricultural operations on designated agricultural lands of long-term significance.

Brief Description: Providing nonagricultural commercial and retail uses that support and sustain agricultural operations on designated agricultural lands of long-term significance.

Sponsors: Senators Hewitt, Haugen, Mulliken, Rasmussen and Parlette.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Land Use & Planning: 1/26/04, 2/5/04 [DP].

Passed Senate: 2/12/04, 49-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON LAND USE & PLANNING

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Mulliken, Chair; Kline, Morton, Murray and T. Sheldon.

Staff: Genevieve Pisarski (786-7488)

Background: Along with conserving productive agricultural land, the state's Growth Management Act requires maintaining and enhancing agricultural industries.

Summary of Bill: Agricultural zoning, which must limit density and restrict nonfarm uses, can allow accessory uses that support, promote, or sustain agricultural operations and production.

Such accessory uses must not interfere with natural resource land uses and must be accessory to the growing of crops or raising of animals. Those of a commercial or retail nature must predominately involve regional agricultural products and products derived from them, experiences related to agriculture, or products produced on site. New or existing buildings together with parking and other supportive uses are allowed for the purpose of operating accessory uses, but they must be consistent with the size and scale of agricultural buildings on the site and must not otherwise convert land to nonagricultural uses.

Accessory uses can include compatible commercial or retail uses, such as storage; production, sales, and marketing of value-added agricultural products; sources of supplemental on-farm income that supports the agricultural use; support services for production, marketing, and distribution of agricultural products; and sales and marketing of regional agricultural products and experiences, locally made art and crafts, and their ancillary retail activities.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: Flexibility is needed to add uses that help keep farms economically viable, while still protecting the rural lifestyle. Fruit growers, for example, have seen their income continually decline, but adding something like a fruit stand runs into local land use limitations. Other states have successfully allowed accessory uses. Small farmers, in particular, will benefit.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: Kristen Sawin, AWB; Hank Manriquez, Cascade Foothills Farmland Assn.; Dennis Nicholson, Chelan County Orchardist; Dan Wood, Farm Bureau; Genesee Adkins, 1000 Friends of WA; Scott Merriman, Assn. of Counties.