

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5722

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As Reported By Senate Committee On:  
Natural Resources, Ocean & Recreation, February 26, 2007

**Title:** An act relating to body-gripping traps.

**Brief Description:** Regarding body-gripping traps.

**Sponsors:** Senators Regala, Haugen, Weinstein and Rasmussen.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Natural Resources, Ocean & Recreation: 2/12/07, 2/26/07 [DPS].

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES, OCEAN & RECREATION

**Majority Report:** That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5722 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Jacobsen, Chair; Rockefeller, Vice Chair; Morton, Ranking Minority Member; Fraser, Hargrove, Poulsen, Spanel, Stevens and Swecker.

**Staff:** Curt Gavigan (786-7437)

**Background:** In 2000, Washington State voters approved Initiative 713, which placed limits on the use of body-gripping traps to capture animals.

It is a gross misdemeanor to use, or authorize the use of, any body-gripping trap to capture any mammal for recreation or commerce in fur. A body-gripping trap is defined as a trap that grips an animal or an animal's body part, including such traps as steel-jawed leghold traps, padded-jaw leghold traps, and neck snares. It is also illegal to buy, sell, barter, or otherwise exchange the fur of a mammal that has been trapped with a body-gripping trap.

Common rat and mouse traps are exempted from the definition of body-gripping traps.

The Director of the Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) may grant permits to use certain traps in limited circumstances, including for the protection of public health and safety and for research purposes.

**Summary of Bill:** Mole traps are added to the list of traps, including rat and mouse traps, that are not considered body-gripping traps.

**EFFECT OF CHANGES MADE BY RECOMMENDED SUBSTITUTE AS PASSED COMMITTEE (Natural Resources, Ocean & Recreation):** Additional language excluding

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any trap used for the purposes of capturing mountain beavers from the definition of a "body-gripping trap" is provided. The title of the bill is amended.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Committee/Commission/Task Force Created:** No.

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

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:** PRO: According to its sponsors, the original intent of I-713 was not to outlaw mole traps. Local governments are having great difficulties with mole damage to parks and cemeteries. Traps are the only real mechanisms that work on moles. Mole holes also raise the prospect of local governments being held liable for injuries.

CON: The bill is inadequate to deal with wildlife problems after I-713, as it fails to deal with otter, opossum, and beaver management issues. Approaches that more comprehensively address the need to enhanced trapping opportunities should be advanced. No one intends to injure endangered species with traps, but more trapping needs to be done to cope with problems landowners are facing.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Senator Regala, prime sponsor; Dawn Vyvyan, Washington Parks and Recreation Association.

CON: Ed Owens, Hunters Heritage Council and Citizens for Responsible Wildlife Management; Debora Munguia, Washington Forest Protection Association; Steve Pozzanghera, Washington DFW; Jack Field, Washington Cattlemen's Association.