

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1682

As Reported by House Committee On:
Agriculture & Natural Resources

Title: An act relating to horticultural pest and disease boards.

Brief Description: Concerning horticultural pest and disease boards.

Sponsors: Representatives Newhouse, Kretz, Chandler, Upthegrove, Johnson and Ross.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Agriculture & Natural Resources: 2/5/09, 2/12/09 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Allows a member of a county horticultural pest and disease board to be a non-resident who owns property in the county and is involved in the primary and commercial production of horticultural products.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 12 members: Representatives Blake, Chair; Jacks, Vice Chair; Chandler, Ranking Minority Member; Smith, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Kretz, Liias, McCoy, Nelson, Ormsby, Pearson, Van De Wege and Warnick.

Staff: Jason Callahan (786-7117)

Background:

All counties, either on the initiative of the county legislative authority or upon the petition of 25 county residents, are permitted to create horticultural pest and disease boards (boards). The boards are empowered to field complaints concerning pest and horticultural disease infestations in the county, inspect any parcel in the county for pests or disease, and order landowners to control and prevent pests. Boards are also authorized to conduct pest and disease control operations on private property and charge the landowner for the expense.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

All boards have five voting members, four who are appointed by county commissioners and one who is appointed by the Director of the Washington State Department of Agriculture. Four of the appointees must own land in the county, live in the county, and be involved in the primary and commercial production of horticultural products. The fifth appointee must possess a practical knowledge of horticultural diseases and pests. Board members serve two-year terms without salary.

Summary of Bill:

If no qualified candidates live in the county, a non-resident who owns property in the county and is involved in the primary and commercial production of horticultural products may be appointed to a board.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) The current requirements of board membership are not always able to be satisfied because there may not be enough residents in the county who are involved in commercial horticulture. This is particularly true in Adams County, where the local board does not have enough qualifying county residents to satisfy the statutory requirements. The bill is more of a technical fix for a situation that regularly arises. Functioning boards are important to the health of an industry that ships its product across the country and internationally.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Dave Ducharme, Yakima Valley Growers and Shippers Association.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.