

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 3095

As Reported by House Committee On:
Agriculture & Natural Resources

Title: An act relating to the Washington tree fruit research commission.

Brief Description: Modifying the powers of the Washington tree fruit research commission.

Sponsors: Representatives Blake, Chandler and Wallace.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Agriculture & Natural Resources: 1/29/10 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Provides additional authorities to the Washington Tree Fruit Research Commission.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 13 members: Representatives Blake, Chair; Ormsby, Vice Chair; Chandler, Ranking Minority Member; Smith, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Jacks, Kretz, Lias, McCoy, Nelson, Pearson, Rolfes, Van De Wege and Warnick.

Staff: Jaclyn Ford (786-7339).

Background:

The Washington Tree Fruit Research Commission (Commission) was created by statute to carry out research regarding the planting, production, harvesting, handling, processing, or shipment of tree fruit and to administer industry specific service programs. The activities of the Commission are funded by assessments on tree fruit commercially produced in the state. One activity the Commission is doing to achieve their mission is providing funds to Washington State University (WSU) to develop new varieties of apples and cherries.

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.

Summary of Bill:

The Commission is given the additional authority to: (1) establish a foundation using the Commission's funds as grant money for the benefit of the tree fruit industry; (2) enter into contracts or interagency agreements with public or private entities; (3) acquire or own intellectual property rights, licenses, and patents, and to collect royalties resulting from the Commission's funded research; (4) engage in appropriate fund-raising activities for supporting activities of the Commission; and (5) accept and expend, or retain any gift, bequest, contribution, or grant from private persons or public agencies.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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 Commission receives most of its funding through tree fruit growers assessments. The Commission would like to create a nonprofit organization that could extradite the commercialization of WSU's inventions. The proposed foundation would be an objective and independent entity, and is envisioned to be entirely self-supporting from royalty revenues.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Blake, prime sponsor; and Jim Halstrom, Washington State Horticultural Association.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.