

VETO MESSAGE ON SSB 6343

April 2, 2010

To the Honorable President and Members,  
The Senate of the State of Washington

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am returning herewith, without my approval, Substitute Senate Bill 6343 entitled:

"AN ACT Relating to the establishment of the Washington food policy forum."

Improved coordination of efforts relating to our state food policy is needed. However, this bill identifies goals that overlap with existing state agency activities. This redundancy will lead to spending time and financial resources on issues already addressed by existing agency programs. In addition, this bill establishes a forum consisting of 25 representatives and charges the forum with addressing a broad range of food system goals over the next five years. Experience teaches that the large size of the forum combined with a broad range of issues diminishes the prospects for success.

While I have vetoed this bill, I am committed to a more focused examination of state food policy, food-related programs, and food-related issues. I intend to issue an executive order directing the Departments of Health, Agriculture, and Social and Health Services, along with a request to the Conservation Commission and the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, to work collaboratively with other agencies and non-governmental organizations, to:

- a. Pursue federal and other grant source funds to identify gaps and opportunities to address food security, nutrition, and health of Washington citizens;
- b. Explore ways to promote nutrition, especially for those who are most in need;
- c. Help educate the public and policy makers on the status of hunger in Washington State, and the role they play in addressing issues of food security, nutrition and health; and
- d. Collaborate and coordinate with private, public and governmental organizations to support realistic solutions to improving food security, nutrition and health for all Washingtonians; and,
- e. Help educate the public and policy makers on the importance of farmland preservation and the importance of promoting

Washington-grown products to farmers' markets, food banks, and institutions.

For these reasons I have vetoed Substitute Senate Bill 6343 in its entirety.

Respectfully submitted,  
Christine Gregoire  
Governor