

SENATE BILL REPORT

SSB 5784

As Passed Senate, March 1, 2011

Title: An act relating to advancing the regional ocean partnership.

Brief Description: Advancing the regional ocean partnership.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Natural Resources & Marine Waters (originally sponsored by Senators Litzow, Ranker, Swecker, Hobbs, Fain, Hill, Pridemore, Nelson, Rockefeller, Regala, Shin and Kline).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Natural Resources & Marine Waters: 2/16/11, 2/21/11 [DPS].
Passed Senate: 3/01/11, 49-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES & MARINE WATERS

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5784 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Ranker, Chair; Regala, Vice Chair; Morton, Ranking Minority Member; Fraser, Hargrove, Stevens and Swecker.

Staff: Curt Gavigan (786-7437)

Background: West Coast Governors' Agreement on Ocean Health (WCGA). On September 18, 2006, the Governors of California, Oregon, and Washington entered into the WCGA. The WCGA cites a need to improve coordination among coastal governing bodies, and states a desire to advance the following goals:

- clean coastal waters and beaches;
- promote effective ecosystem based management;
- reduce impacts of offshore development;
- increase ocean awareness and literacy among the region's citizens;
- expand ocean and coastal scientific information, research, and monitoring; and
- encourage sustainable economic development of coastal communities.

Marine Resources Stewardship Trust Account (Account). The Account was created in 2010 as an appropriated account that can accept grants, gifts, donations, and appropriations. Monies in the Account may be used for purposes including marine management planning,

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marine spatial planning, research, monitoring, and the restoration and enhancement of marine habitat or resources.

Summary of Substitute Bill: Makes a Series of Findings and Statements Regarding Ocean and Coastal Resource Management. The Legislature:

- finds that Washington, Oregon, and California have a common interest in marine waters management, and that coordination between these states is essential to achieve effective resource management;
- recognizes the WCGA as an important step towards such coordination; and
- cites the potential for federal resources and policy gains resulting from coordination, and calls for continued coordination efforts through the WCGA and the Legislatures.

Provides for Recommendations on Expenditures from the Account. When funds are deposited in the Account, the Governor must recommend to the Legislature prior to the next regular legislative session activities and projects to be funded from the Account. The recommendations must be consistent with the allowable uses of the account and the goals articulated in the 2006 WCGA.

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 on Original Bill: PRO: Caring for the state's marine waters is both good environmental and economic policy. There is support for regional collaboration on ocean management, as the ocean jointly affects the West Coast as a whole. Although the state can designate a state entity to play a lead role, it must be in conjunction with a larger regional effort.

OTHER: The Department of Ecology supports the intent of the bill and moving forward with regional ocean planning.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Litzow, prime sponsor; Bill Robinson, the Nature Conservancy.

OTHER: Brian Lynn, Department of Ecology.