
**Agriculture & Natural Resources
Committee**

HB 1770

Brief Description: Concerning the appointment of nonvoting advisory members to commodity boards.

Sponsors: Representatives Buys, Blake, Chandler, Lytton and Ryu.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Allows commodity boards created by marketing orders or agreements to appoint up to two nonvoting advisory members to the board.

Hearing Date: 2/19/13

Staff: Cherlyn Walden (786-7296).

Background:

The Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) oversees the marketing of agricultural commodities. The WSDA director may adopt a marketing order which establishes a commodity board for an agricultural commodity or agricultural commodities with like or common qualities or producers.

A commodity board is created for the purpose of aiding agricultural producers in preventing economic waste in the marketing of their agricultural commodities; developing efficient methods of marketing agricultural products; enabling agricultural producers to develop better and more efficient production, irrigation, processing, transportation, handling, marketing, and utilization of agricultural products; and protecting the interest of consumers by assuring a good quality supply of agricultural commodities, among other reasons. A commodity board is composed of 5-13 members including the WSDA director or his/her representative and equal representation, if possible, of producers and handlers.

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.

Both producer and handler board members must be citizens and residents over the age of eighteen years. A producer board member must be and have been engaged in producing the affected commodity within the state for at least five years with a substantial portion of his or her income coming from producing that commodity, and not be engaged in business, directly or indirectly as a handler or other dealer. A handler board member must be and have been either individually or as an officer or employee actually engaged in handling the affected commodity within the state for at least five years with a substantial portion of his or her income coming from handling that commodity. Producers and handlers are required to continue to meet these qualifications during their terms of office.

Washington currently has 23 agricultural commodity boards, including: the Apple Commission, Beer Commission, Dry Pea and Lentil Commission, and the Red Raspberry Commission. Fifteen are established by the WSDA director through the adoption of marketing orders and seven commissions are established under separate state statutes.

Summary of Bill:

A commodity board may appoint up to two nonvoting advisory members to the board who have expertise in marketing, operations, or other topics relevant to the work of the board. Nonvoting advisory members' term of office cannot exceed three years, but they may be reappointed to serve additional consecutive terms.

Nonvoting advisory members do not count towards establishing a quorum of the board, and they are compensated the same as board members.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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