

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SB 6166

As Reported by House Committee On:
Agriculture & Natural Resources

Title: An act relating to extending the pesticide application safety committee.

Brief Description: Extending the pesticide application safety committee.

Sponsors: Senators Saldaña, Torres, Hasegawa, Nobles and Valdez.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Agriculture & Natural Resources: 2/20/24, 2/21/24 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Extends the expiration date of the Pesticide Application Safety Committee to July 1, 2035.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 8 members: Representatives Chapman, Chair; Reeves, Vice Chair; Dent, Ranking Minority Member; Kloba, Lekanoff, Orcutt, Schmick and Springer.

Staff: Rebecca Lewis (786-7339).

Background:

The Pesticide Application Safety Committee (Committee) was formed in 2019 to explore how the Departments of Agriculture (WSDA), Labor and Industries (L&I), and Health (DOH), and the Washington Poison Center collect and track data and consider the feasibility and requirements of developing a shared database, including how the DOH could use existing tools to better display multiagency data regarding pesticides. The Committee

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may also evaluate and recommend policy options related to:

- improving agricultural pesticide application safety;
- establishing baseline data;
- improving communication, information, and education to and among members of the agricultural community, including developing materials in Spanish, using translation applications, and working with manufacturers regarding pesticide labeling;
- compiling the industry's best practices to limit pesticide exposure;
- reporting of pesticide exposure, including gaining better understanding of why workers do not report exposures, and related issues;
- creating incentives for using new technology; and
- evaluating and exploring exposure prevention techniques and protocols and best practices for use of personal safety equipment and reflective gear.

Members of the Committee include: legislators from the two largest caucuses from both chambers of the Legislature; agency heads from the WSDA, the DOH, L&I, and the Department of Natural Resources; the Dean of the Washington State University's College of Agricultural, Human, and Natural Resource Sciences; the pesticide safety education coordinator at the Washington State University Cooperative Extension; and the Director of the University of Washington Pacific Northwest Agricultural Safety and Health Center. The Secretary of the DOH and the Director of the WSDA are the cochairs of the Committee.

An advisory work group was also created to collect information and make recommendations to the full Committee on topics requiring unique expertise and perspectives on issues within the Committee's jurisdiction. The advisory group consists of: a representative from the WSDA; two representatives of employee organizations that represent farmworkers; two farmworkers with expertise on pesticide application; a representative of community and migrant health centers; a toxicologist; a representative of growers who use air blast sprayers; a representative of growers who use aerial pesticide application; a representative of growers who use fumigation to apply pesticides; and a representative of aerial applicators.

The advisory work group must hold meetings at the Committee's request. To reduce costs, the advisory work group must conduct meetings using teleconferencing or other methods and may hold one in-person meeting per fiscal year.

These provisions expire in 2025.

Summary of Bill:

The Pesticide Application Safety Committee expires on July 1, 2035, instead of on July 1, 2025. The provision requiring the advisory work group to conduct their meetings primarily via teleconferencing or other methods other than one in-person meeting per fiscal year is

removed.

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) Members on both sides of the aisle have collaborated in this process. State agencies and communities have been making progress in bringing forward and sharing data related to pesticide application safety, so it makes sense to extend this deadline and provide the flexibility in the way this bill does. The work of the Pesticide Application Safety Committee is fundamentally different from the work of the Pesticide Advisory Board, but is very valuable to help the agencies coordinate on application safety issues.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Senator Rebecca Saldaña, prime sponsor; and Kelly McLain, Washington State Department of Agriculture.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.