
HOUSE BILL 1608

State of Washington

69th Legislature

2025 Regular Session

By Representatives Peterson, Berg, Fitzgibbon, Chase, Walen, Farivar, Leavitt, Ramel, Gregerson, Parshley, Reed, Bernbaum, Goodman, Springer, Kloba, Hill, Macri, Fosse, and Davis

Read first time 01/27/25. Referred to Committee on Agriculture & Natural Resources.

1 AN ACT Relating to the selling, possessing, transporting, and
2 distributing of farmed octopus; adding a new chapter to Title 19 RCW;
3 and prescribing penalties.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that octopuses are
6 highly intelligent animals that exhibit the ability to learn and
7 problem solve. Octopuses use tools, solve puzzles, untie knots, and
8 learn from observation. A new study indicates that octopuses may
9 share a genetic trait with humans, called a transposon or "jumping
10 gene," that could explain octopuses' intelligence and ability to
11 cognitively process and adapt to their environment. In addition,
12 octopuses are sentient beings capable of experiencing emotions, such
13 as fear, pain, pleasure, stress, and affection. In 2024, the
14 legislature prohibited octopus aquaculture in Washington for reasons
15 including that an octopus' intelligence makes it difficult to execute
16 and balance high welfare farming with a need for solitary enclosures.
17 Octopus are solitary creatures that can become aggressive toward each
18 other when kept in confinement and are known for being able to escape
19 from many different types of enclosures. Therefore, the legislature
20 intends to expand on protections for these highly intelligent and

1 sentient beings by eliminating the economic market for farmed
2 octopus.

3 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** The definitions in this section apply
4 throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires
5 otherwise.

6 (1) "Aquaculture" has the same definition as in RCW 15.85.020.

7 (2) "Person" includes individuals, firms, partnerships,
8 corporations, and associations.

9 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** (1) A person may not knowingly sell,
10 possess, transport, or distribute any species of octopus that is the
11 result or product of aquaculture.

12 (2) A person violating this section may be subject to a civil
13 penalty of up to \$1,000 for each violation. The attorney general,
14 acting in the name of the state, may seek recovery of the penalty in
15 civil action in superior court.

16 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** Sections 1 through 3 of this act
17 constitute a new chapter in Title 19 RCW.

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