

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5147

As of January 18, 1995

Title: An act relating to safety standards for agriculture.

Brief Description: Providing that safety and health standards for agriculture shall be those in effect on January 1, 1993.

Sponsors: Senators Morton, Rasmussen, Hochstatter and Bauer.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Agriculture & Agricultural Trade & Development: 1/19/95.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & AGRICULTURAL TRADE & DEVELOPMENT

Staff: Bob Lee (786-7404)

Background: The Department of Labor and Industries has broad rulemaking authority to adopt rules providing for the safety of workers.

Prior to 1994, there was a separate set of regulations that applied specifically to the agricultural sector. They are known as vertical standards and are found in Chapter 296-306 WAC. There are also general safety and health standards that apply to other industries. These are known as horizontal standards and are found in Chapter 296-24 WAC. Over the years, the agricultural sector were not subject to these general safety and health standards.

In February 1994, the Department of Labor and Industries adopted rules that placed agriculture under the general safety and health standards, with an effective date of March 1, 1995.

Disagreements continue as to the need and benefit of bringing the agricultural sector under the general safety and health rules.

Summary of Bill: The agricultural safety and health standards that were in effect on January 1, 1993 shall be the health and safety standards for agriculture. Other health and safety standards shall not apply to the agricultural industry. The Department of Labor and Industries may adopt amendments to the current standards that are necessary to meet the minimum requirements to comply with federal Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) requirements.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 13, 1995.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

