

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5442

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Agriculture & Agricultural Trade & Development, February 23, 1995

Title: An act relating to weed control.

Brief Description: Directing the state weeds board to study weed control on state lands.

Sponsors: Senators Rasmussen, Morton, Loveland, Prince, Snyder and Newhouse.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Agriculture & Agricultural Trade & Development: 2/1/95, 2/23/95 [DPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & AGRICULTURAL TRADE & DEVELOPMENT

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5442 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Rasmussen, Chair; Loveland, Vice Chair; A. Anderson, Bauer, Morton, Newhouse and Snyder.

Staff: Vic Moon (786-7469)

Background: There has been growing concern about the problem of weeds on state owned and state managed lands, including highway rights-of-way. Weeds growing in these areas spread to private and federal lands causing severe weed problems.

Summary of Substitute Bill: The Legislature finds that there is a loss of productivity from state lands due to infestation by noxious weeds. There is a need to have policy direction to ensure that state lands and state land agency managers set an example of excellence, and to halt the spread of noxious weeds from state lands to private lands.

State agencies are ultimately responsible for noxious weed control on state land. The spread of noxious weeds on state lands decreases wildlife habitat and land productivity. The State Weed Board is directed to study the cost of controlling weeds on state-owned lands, and is required to identify weed species that are practical to control. The board must estimate the impacts and costs of not controlling noxious weeds in the state of Washington. The board develops a prioritized list of weeds and studies alternative funding methods for Washington's noxious weed control program.

All state agencies must control noxious weeds on lands that they own. Agencies may not shift the burden of complying with noxious weed control to anyone, including lessees and permittees. The Senate Committee on Agriculture & Agricultural Trade & Development and the House Committee on Agriculture & Ecology must study state land leasing practices and report their findings to the Legislature in 1996. State agencies are directed to list

noxious weed control projects in order of priority, along with their plans to control infestations, for the 1996 session.

Counties choosing not to activate noxious weed control boards must pay the Department of Agriculture for the expense of carrying out the functions of county noxious weed boards.

An appropriation of \$30,000 is made to Washington State University for the selection, testing and production of biological control agents for knapweed. The sum of \$20,000 is appropriated from the general fund to the State Weed Board to conduct a study of controlling weeds on state-owned and state-managed lands.

An emergency clause is included.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The original bill proposed a study of weeds on state lands. The substitute bill has a study, directives to agencies to control weeds and a program given to Washington State University to develop a control for knapweed.

Appropriation: \$30,000 to Washington State University; \$20,000 to State Weed Board.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: The state agencies are not doing enough to control weeds on state-owned lands and they are spreading to private lands. There needs to be a concerted effort to control weeds by both public and private ownerships, including federal agencies.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: Marty Hudson, Klickitat County Noxious Weed Control Board; Kent Lebsack, WA Cattlemen; Laurie Pender, State Weed Board; Stan Biles, Dept. of Natural Resources; Chuck Perry, Dept. of Fish and Wildlife; Rick Cooper, Dept. of Natural Resources; K.O. Rosenberg, NE Tri-Counties; Larry Rust, Dept. of Transportation; Diane Dolstad, WA Dept. of Agriculture.