
HOUSE BILL 1710

State of Washington

64th Legislature

2015 Regular Session

By Representatives Tarleton, Walkinshaw, McBride, Ortiz-Self, Sawyer, Peterson, Gregerson, and Hudgins

Read first time 01/27/15. Referred to Committee on Technology & Economic Development.

1 AN ACT Relating to fostering economic growth in Washington by
2 supporting the in-state production, processing, and distribution of
3 food supply; creating new sections; making appropriations; and
4 providing an expiration date.

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

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature recognizes the
7 important role of food production, processing, and distribution
8 within the state in promoting food security, community resilience,
9 and economic opportunity in Washington. Washington residents spend
10 more than forty-five billion dollars per year on food, but the vast
11 majority of this money is spent on food that is grown and processed
12 outside of the state. Keeping food dollars in Washington through
13 improvements in local food production, processing, and distribution
14 could result in widespread benefits, including increased employment
15 and economic growth throughout the farm and food economies. The
16 legislature further finds that supporting the local food industry is
17 critical to building and sustaining a diverse and resilient economy
18 in Washington.

19 (2) It is the intent of the legislature to engage in a
20 collaborative process with local farmers, food processors, and food
21 distributors to evaluate changes in state and local policies and the

1 funding that is needed to foster resilience and growth in the local
2 food sector. The legislature intends to develop and implement an
3 economic development strategy to promote a more dependable, healthy
4 local food supply and expand economic opportunities for Washington
5 food producers, processors, and distributors. The legislature intends
6 the economic benefits of these efforts to support and be a part of a
7 greater food supply network linking small local farms, schools,
8 farmers markets, food banks, shelters, and many other areas touched
9 by issues surrounding fresh food access.

10 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1) The Washington State University center
11 for sustaining agriculture and natural resources shall study the
12 economic development of the local food system in Washington.

13 (2)(a) The study shall identify a ten-year goal for expansion of
14 the state's food production, processing, and distribution capacity
15 by:

16 (i) Evaluating the state's capacity to produce a variety of food
17 products given the state's environment and climate;

18 (ii) Assessing a potential market demand for an increased local
19 food supply, through surveys of processors, distributors, and buyers;

20 (iii) Identifying infrastructure needs to support the local food
21 industry, including processing capacity and transportation networks;

22 (iv) Assessing the institutional capacity of state agencies and
23 organizations to foster economic growth in the food sector;

24 (v) Evaluating changes in state planning, permitting,
25 environmental regulation, and financing to enhance food production,
26 processing, and distribution; and

27 (vi) Identifying legislative actions needed to implement food
28 system improvements.

29 (b) The recommendations of the study must include short and long-
30 term action plans for the legislature to support and sustain the
31 local food sector in Washington. The recommendations of the study may
32 include specific legislative approaches, such as changes in state
33 law, and nonlegislative approaches, such as action plans for state
34 agencies and local governments.

35 (3) Washington State University must form an advisory committee
36 to provide technical information, advice, and assistance in
37 completing the study. The advisory committee must include
38 representatives of farm organizations, food processors, food

1 distributors, restaurateurs, food service directors, and local food
2 advocacy organizations.

3 (4) Washington State University must submit to the governor and
4 the appropriate committees of the legislature a final study report
5 with findings and recommendations by November 30, 2015, and in
6 compliance with RCW 43.01.036.

7 (5) This section expires December 31, 2016.

8 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** The sum of seventy-five thousand dollars,
9 or as much thereof as may be necessary, is appropriated for the
10 fiscal year ending June 30, 2016, from the general fund to Washington
11 State University for the purposes of section 2 of this act, provided
12 that a minimum of seventy-five thousand dollars is matched in other
13 sources of funding to complete the study.

14 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** If specific funding for the purposes of
15 section 2 of this act, referencing section 2 of this act by bill or
16 chapter number and section number, is not provided by June 30, 2015,
17 in the omnibus appropriations act, section 2 of this act is null and
18 void.

19 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** The sum of one million dollars, or as much
20 thereof as may be necessary, is appropriated for the fiscal year
21 ending June 30, 2016, from the general fund to the department of
22 agriculture for the purposes of revitalizing the department of
23 agriculture's farm-to-school program, RCW 15.64.060, the small farm
24 direct marketing assistance program, RCW 15.64.050, and this act.

25 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** If any provision of this act or its
26 application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the
27 remainder of the act or the application of the provision to other
28 persons or circumstances is not affected.

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