



STATE OF WASHINGTON

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To the Honorable President and Members,
The Senate of the State of Washington

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am returning herewith, without my approval, Substitute Senate Bill No. 6636 entitled:

"AN ACT Relating to the disposal of animals;"

This bill would have created an interagency work group charged with developing a comprehensive state policy on proper methods for disposing of diseased animal carcasses. It also authorized the Department of Agriculture to issue emergency rules for the disposal of diseased animal carcasses.

Since the Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) incident in our state last December, our Departments of Agriculture, Ecology, and Health have worked closely together responding to the event, working with federal agencies, local governments, and affected stakeholders. These agencies have already undertaken an evaluation of the incident with a particular focus on disposal. The agencies will be providing me with a report on their findings and recommendations for any necessary changes.

Sections 2 and 3 of the bill would have provided the Department of Agriculture emergency rulemaking authority for rules relating to the disposal of diseased animal carcasses. RCW 16.68.170 currently authorizes the Department to write rules relating to the disposal of diseased animal carcasses. RCW 16.36.040 also gives the director authority to adopt rules relating to the prevention of the spread of infectious animal diseases. In both cases, the director may promulgate emergency rules as provided by RCW 34.05.350.

Finally, the Legislature failed to provide specific funding for the purposes of this bill.

For these reasons, I have vetoed Substitute Senate Bill No. 6636 in its entirety.

Respectfully submitted,

Gary Locke
Governor