
HOUSE BILL 2241

State of Washington 61st Legislature 2009 Regular Session

By Representatives Kenney, Conway, Chase, Morrell, and Wood

Read first time 02/17/09. Referred to Committee on Commerce & Labor.

1 AN ACT Relating to protecting the long-term viability of
2 Washington's agricultural economy; and creating a new section.

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

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature finds that agriculture
5 is a cornerstone of Washington's economy. Agriculture and related
6 industries grossed nearly twenty billion dollars and employed tens of
7 thousands of workers in 2007. Agricultural and food products valued at
8 nearly ten billion dollars were exported through the state's ports in
9 2007.

10 (2) The legislature recognizes that agriculture faces significant
11 challenges now and in the future. The peak harvest workforce has
12 fallen from sixty thousand to forty-five thousand over the past decade.
13 There have been significant revenue losses from crops that went
14 unpicked in recent years.

15 (3) For these reasons, the legislature intends to develop
16 strategies to help employers obtain a legal and stable workforce, and
17 to ensure that farm workers have fair and safe housing and working
18 conditions. In developing these strategies, the legislature further

1 intends to work closely with representatives of both farmers and farm
2 workers. The legislature intends that these strategies be designed to
3 protect the long-term viability of Washington's agricultural economy.

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