

HCS HB 1884 -- AGRICULTURAL PROGRAMS

SPONSOR: Quinn, 7

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "do pass" by the Committee on Agriculture Policy by a vote of 9 to 0.

This substitute changes the laws regarding agricultural programs.

NATIONAL ANIMAL IDENTIFICATION SYSTEM

The substitute allows the Department of Agriculture to support a voluntary animal identification program. The department is prohibited from mandating National Animal Identification System (NAIS) premises registration or participation in the NAIS administered by the United States Department of Agriculture without specific authorization from the General Assembly except for disease control programs.

Any person who participates in the NAIS may withdraw from the system at any time, and all personal information related to a participant will be deleted from the system unless the participant is part of an ongoing disease investigation or disease monitoring or control program.

If these provisions interfere with the marketing of Missouri livestock, the Governor, by executive order, can waive the requirements until the General Assembly takes action to reinstate or modify the provisions during the next regular session of the General Assembly or any special session called by the Governor.

LARGE ANIMAL VETERINARY STUDENT LOAN ASSISTANCE

The substitute changes the laws regarding the Large Animal Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program and the Large Animal Veterinary Student Loan Program within the Department of Agriculture. The substitute:

- (1) Adds lawful permanent residency in the United States to the criteria for a student to be eligible to participate in the Large Animal Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program;
- (2) Specifies that up to six qualifying veterinarian students can be awarded a maximum of \$20,000 per academic year up to a cumulative total of \$80,000 with priority given to eligible students who have established financial need;
- (3) Specifies that the maximum amount the department can forgive for each year of qualifying service is \$20,000;

(4) Requires a loan recipient who fails to meet the qualified service requirement to begin repayment of the loan within six months of the first day on which he or she did not meet the service requirement; and

(5) Authorizes the department to grant a loan deferment to a student who is on active duty in any branch of the armed forces of the United States.

The Large Animal Veterinary Student Loan Program will expire June 30, 2013.

FISCAL NOTE: Estimated Cost on General Revenue Fund of \$359,800 in FY 2009, \$444,714 in FY 2010, and \$458,055 in FY 2011. No impact on Other State Funds in FY 2009, FY 2010, and FY 2011.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that the National Animal Identification System should remain voluntary; the associated costs of the program are disproportionately higher for small producers; and price premiums earned for voluntary participation in certain programs may disappear.

Testifying for the bill was Representative Dethrow.

OPPOSERS: Those who oppose the bill say that the National Animal Identification System is necessary to prevent large area quarantines in the event of an animal disease outbreak. Other states and most countries require source verification as a condition of marketing livestock.

Testifying against the bill was Missouri Farm Bureau.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill say that 65% of animal diseases can be transmitted to humans, and various aspects of the National Animal Identification System were explained.

Testifying on the bill was Department of Agriculture.