



STATE OF WASHINGTON
WASHINGTON STATE BOARD OF HEALTH

PO Box 47990 • Olympia, Washington 98504-7990

February 23, 2005

The Honorable Marilyn Rasmussen
Washington State Senate
Agriculture & Rural Economic Development Committee Chair
210 John A. Cherberg Building
PO Box 40466
Olympia, Washington 98504-0466

Dear Senator Rasmussen:

I am writing as chair of the Washington State Board of Health to support Senate Bill 5961, relating to the proper management of livestock mortalities, which is scheduled to be heard by your committee tomorrow.

The Board has general authority to adopt rules related to the disposal of solid and liquid wastes (RCW 43.20.050 (2) (b)). Under this authority, the Board regulates the disposal of dead animals (WAC 246-203-120 (c)). Senate Bill 5961 gives the Department of Agriculture specific authority to develop rules to assure the proper management of all non-emergency livestock carcass disposals to fulfill the requirement of 40 CFR Sec 122.42.

Senate Bill 5961 is a reasonable and measured response to the federal mandate and to the need to clarify roles with regard to rulemaking. It will help resolve existing conflicts between statutes, the administrative code, and agency policies. The Board believes that its rules should and will continue to apply to the disposal of non-agricultural animals, such as domestic pets. Health agencies should remain involved in regulating and responding to the disposal of dead animals in emergency situations where the spread of diseases to humans may be of concern.

I would like to request an amendment to Section 2 of Senate Bill 5961. The State Board of Health should be listed as a consulting agency in the development and adoption of rules related to the non-emergency disposal of livestock carcasses. The Board believes that it can contribute to the development of these rules and would appreciate the opportunity to work with the Department of Agriculture and other agencies to assure that the agencies' rules do not conflict.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thomas Locke".

Thomas Locke, MD, MPH
Chair, Washington State Board of Health

cc: Senate Agriculture & Rural Economic Development Committee Members
Ms. Christina Hulet, Governor's Executive Policy Office
Ms. Chris Townley, Department of Health
Washington State Board of Health Members
Mr. Craig McLaughlin, State Board of Health