



Hundredth Legislature - Second Session - 2008
Introducer's Statement of Intent
LB 862

Chairperson: Philip Erdman
Committee: Agriculture
Date of Hearing: February 5, 2008

The following constitutes the reasons for this bill and the purposes which are sought to be accomplished thereby:

LB 862 provides for additional cash revenue streams to support the Department of Agriculture's responsibilities under the Noxious Weed Control Act and also directs certain funds and cash revenue streams to replenish a cash fund expended by the Department in grants to stimulate cooperative, innovative projects of noxious and invasive weed control. Specifically, LB 862 redirects a portion of revenues collected under the Commercial Feed Act to the Noxious Weed Cash Fund. The bill further provides for a one-time transfer of \$200,000 from the Commercial Feed Act Administrative Fund to the Noxious Weed and Invasive Plant Species Assistance Fund (grant fund), and redirects transfers of excess cash funds in the weed book publication fund and 25% of the revenues from the sale of a weed publication that currently are remitted to the Noxious Weed Cash Fund to the grant fund.

The bill addresses an impending shortfall in funding of the Department of Agriculture's core responsibilities under the Noxious Weed Control Act. The Noxious Weed Control Act is currently funded through a combination of cash and general funds. Budget actions since 2000 have reduced the general fund support of the program, including budget actions last session which reduced the general fund share of program funding to less than 15% for the current biennium. This will result in a drawdown of, and quickly exhaust cash reserves. Absent legislative intervention, this will require either a reduction of program activity or new infusions of general funds. The revenue streams provided under the bill are anticipated to fully cash fund the program for the foreseeable future.

Principal Introducer: _____
Philip Erdman, Chairperson
Committee on Agriculture