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FLOOR DEBATE

February 19, 2003 LB 161

the National Institute of Standards and Technology to do three...two things. It's to perform the testing and calibration of weights and measures devices, and it changes the rules governing the sale of bulk commodities. And, three, it changes the standards for packaging and displaying packaged goods. I won't go into a lot of detail. I guess if you have any questions, you can ask us and we can try to answer them. It...one thing, important part of it is it revises the schedule of annual device registration and inspection fees charged under the act. Currently, the annual device registration fee is \$4 plus an annual inspection fee that varies by device, inspected according to the relative burden placed on the Department of Resources to perform the annual inspection. And LB 161 actually adopts two sets of fees. One is an annual inspection fee due on August 1, 2003, and it has a statutory cap on the amount of fees that are due on August 1, 2004, and thereafter. The new language regarding fees set beginning in 2004 provides that the director of Agriculture shall adjust the fees on an annual basis according to the following parameters: the fees shall be set so that estimated annual cash fund revenue does not exceed 107 percent of the cash fund appropriation; and number two, that the fees be set so that the obligated (sic) cash fund year-end balance is not to exceed 17 percent budgeted to maintain no more than two months...okay, 107 or 17 percent, so it cannot be over 17 percent of the annual budget, the reserve cannot be over that, which is about a two-month reserve. The bill also has the emergency clause so that it can take effect on August 1. And there are two other minor changes that are clean-up changes. It adopts a more accurate terminology for establishing authenticity of the standards used by the Department of Agriculture. And it clarifies that there is no proration of the fees due to the device being used only part of the year. I had a handout I was going to hand out but since we passed over the bill it caught me before I was quite ready. The diagram showed what's happening to the fees. Part of it is due to last year, \$400,000 was taken out of the Weights & Measures and I think was transferred to the feedlot management or Feedlot Waste Management Act. When that happened, then all at once we do not have enough fees and that's kind of been a problem when we start raiding cash funds. The part in here that adjusts the fees annually is something I think is good because it will not let that cash fund build up to where