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Governor



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To the Honorable President and Members,
The Senate of the State of Washington

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am returning, without my approval as to Section 11, Engrossed Second Substitute Senate Bill 5923 entitled:

"AN ACT Relating to aquatic invasive species enforcement and control."

Aquatic invasive species pose significant risks to the marine and freshwaters of the state. It is imperative that we continue to prevent their introduction, as they are extremely difficult and costly to eradicate once established. This bill provides the clear policy, the compliance programs and the necessary funding to ensure our success in this effort.

However, I am vetoing Section 11 of Engrossed Second Substitute Senate Bill 5923 which would permanently establish the Ballast Water Work Group and significantly expand its duties. The Work Group has been an excellent source of expertise and advice but it is not currently in the position to take on all of the responsibilities outlined in the bill. In addition, we have in place the Washington Invasive Species Council to provide policy direction, planning and coordination for addressing invasive species in the state.

I appreciate the need for cooperation and support from many stakeholders and agencies in order to succeed with this program. I understand that Director Koenings will establish advisory and technical groups, as needed, to implement this bill and will work closely with the Invasive Species Council to coordinate our state response to the threat of invasive species.

For these reasons, I have vetoed Section 11 of Engrossed Second Substitute Senate Bill 5923.

With the exception of Section 11, Engrossed Second Substitute Senate Bill 5923 is approved.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/
Christine O. Gregoire
Governor