

DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE BILL ANALYSIS

AMENDMENT DATE: July 1, 2008
POSITION: Oppose
SPONSOR: California Beekeepers Association

BILL NUMBER: AB 2777
AUTHOR: D. La Malfa

BILL SUMMARY: Beekeeping on Public Lands

This bill would require the Resources Agency to establish a statewide policy to temporarily allow commercial beekeepers to use appropriate public lands under the jurisdiction of departments, boards, commissions, and conservancies within the Resources Agency, for the keeping of honeybee hives. "Public lands" include conservancies, wildlife areas and undesignated lands except for wilderness areas, state wilderness, ecological reserves, and state parks.

FISCAL SUMMARY

While the cost to develop a statewide policy for beekeeping is likely minor, this bill does not exclude or limit liability for the Resources Agency departments if visitors are injured by bees. This exposes the state to potential liability costs since visitors with bee allergies may develop mild to life threateningly severe allergic reactions if stung by a honeybee. In addition, if the statewide policy requires issuance of permits and collection of permit fees, there may be some minimal ongoing costs. All costs associated with the bill would be addressed through the budget process.

In addition, public lands under the jurisdiction of the State Lands Commission (SLC) typically contain commercially valuable minerals such as oil, natural gas and, geothermal resources. The SLC manages the lands and generates revenue for the state through leases that provide compensation for the state resources taken. For the purpose of this analysis, Finance assumes a similar revenue agreement may be developed, at the discretion of the Resources Agency, as part of the statewide policy for commercial beekeeping on public lands.

COMMENTS

Finance is opposed to this bill because it may expose the state to potential liability costs associated with bee stings from commercially kept honeybees on public lands. It is unclear whether this bill provides the Resources Agency with the authority to limit the state's liability for third-party injuries as part of the statewide policy.

Finance notes that in 2000 the U.S. Department of the Interior ceased allowing beekeeping in various wildlife refuges in Florida because they had determined that commercial beekeeping was not compatible with refuge goals and management objectives.

(Continued)

Code/Department Agency or Revenue Type	SO LA CO RV	PROP 98	FC	(Fiscal Impact by Fiscal Year)					Fund Code
				(Dollars in Thousands)					
				2008-2009	FC	2009-2010	FC	2010-2011	
0540/Secty Res	SO	No		----- No/Minor Fiscal Impact -----					0001

Analyst/Principal (0631) M. Almy	Date	Program Budget Manager Karen Finn	Date
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Department Deputy Director	Date
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Governor's Office:	By:	Date:	Position Approved _____
			Position Disapproved _____

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