

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

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Committee Report (Substituted)

DIGEST

The State of Texas is concerned about the use of certain antibiotics such as chloramphenicol, nitrofurans, and other banned veterinary drugs in imported shrimps and other seafood from other countries like China, Thailand, and Vietnam that can cause severe toxic effect in humans, including hypoplastic anemia, which is usually irreversible and fatal.

Currently, the federal Food and Drug Administration (FDA) inspects only two percent of all seafood imported into the United States and uses a testing procedure that cannot detect the presence of chloramphenicol below one part per billion. Although the FDA tests of imported food did not detect chloramphenicol in shrimp from China and other countries in 2002, independent testing performed by or for Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas detected chloramphenicol in samples of imported shrimp from those countries at levels harmful to human health. Furthermore, United States-based companies involved in the importing and processing of shrimp are opposed to the use of chloramphenicol and are working with the domestic shrimp industry and the FDA to develop effective protocol, including in-country testing, certification foreign testing facilities, and other means to detect banned antibiotics and to exclude all tainted products from the United States markets.

PURPOSE

Resolves that the 78th Legislature of the State of Texas hereby express concern about the presence of chloramphenicol, nitrofurans, and other banned veterinary drugs in imported shrimp, the potential adverse impact on the safety of the food supply, and the resultant risk to human health, and call for the FDA to continue working with both importers and domestic stakeholders to develop effective methods to detect and exclude seafood imports containing chloramphenicol, nitrofurans, and other banned veterinary drugs;

Resolves that the 78th Legislature of the State of Texas hereby call for immediate and focused actions by the United States government to improve the enforcement of food import restrictions on seafood imports containing chloramphenicol, nitrofurans, and other banned veterinary drugs in order to ensure the safety of the food supply and to protect consumers in the United States and, in particular, in Texas.