
THIRD READING

Bill No: AB 1551
Author: Krell (D)
Introduced: 1/7/26
Vote: 21

SENATE AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE: 4-0, 6/16/26

AYES: Caballero, Alvarado-Gil, McNerney, Padilla

NO VOTE RECORDED: Ashby

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 64-0, 4/9/26 (Consent) - See last page for vote

SUBJECT: California Rice Commission: purpose

SOURCE: Author

DIGEST: This bill declares the California Rice Commission to be necessary for maintaining a sufficient footprint of annual rice acreage to support the wildlife habitat objectives of the state.

ANALYSIS:

Existing law establishes the California Rice Commission to promote the sale of rice, educate and instruct the wholesale and retail trade with respect to proper methods of handling and selling rice, and conduct scientific research (Food and Agricultural Code Section § 71000).

This bill declares the commission to be necessary to maintain a sufficient footprint of annual rice acreage to support the wildlife habitat objectives of California.

FISCAL EFFECT: Appropriation: No Fiscal Com.: No Local: No

SUPPORT: (Verified 6/16/26)

Audobon California
California Rice Commission
The Nature Conservancy

OPPOSITION: (Verified 6/16/26)

None received

ARGUMENTS IN SUPPORT: According to the author:

“California’s roughly 500,000 acres of rice provide vital surrogate wetland habitat to a diverse array of species, including Giant Garter snakes, Sandhill Cranes, and millions of other waterfowl, shorebirds, and native fish.

Climate change, water shortages, market shifts, and urban growth all pose a challenge to maintaining enough rice acreage to guarantee a viable habitat for these species.

The recent UC Davis study “The Rice Footprint” sets forth a plan to maintain this critical ecosystem, which would cost an estimated \$2 billion to restore if we fail to preserve it.

AB 1551 supports this crucial conservation work by identifying implementation of the Rice Footprint as a priority of the California Rice Commission.”

The California Rice Commission wrote in support of the bill stating, in part:

“By codifying the maintenance of a sufficient rice footprint into statute as part of the Commission’s purpose, AB 1551 will:

- Provide clarity and long-term direction for state policy in supporting agriculture that also delivers demonstrable ecological benefits;
- Facilitate coordination between rice growers, conservation partners, and state agencies to prioritize voluntary conservation programs, easements, and management practices;
- Strengthen California’s ability to protect working lands that serve vital ecosystem functions while contributing to food security and local economic resilience.”

ARGUMENTS IN OPPOSITION: None received

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 64-0, 4/9/26

AYES: Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alanis, Alvarez, Bains, Berman, Boerner, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Castillo, Chen, Connolly, Davies, DeMaio, Dixon, Elhawary, Ellis, Fong, Gabriel, Garcia, Gipson, Mark González, Hadwick, Harabedian, Hart, Hoover, Irwin, Jackson, Johnson, Krell, Lackey, Lee, Lowenthal, Macedo, McKinnor, Muratsuchi, Nguyen, Pacheco, Papan, Patel, Patterson, Pellerin, Petrie-Norris, Quirk-Silva, Ramos, Ransom, Michelle Rodriguez, Rogers, Blanca Rubio, Sanchez, Schiavo, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Soria, Stefani, Ta, Tangipa, Valencia, Wallis, Ward, Wicks, Wilson, Rivas

NO VOTE RECORDED: Addis, Arambula, Ávila Farías, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Bonta, Bryan, Flora, Gallagher, Jeff Gonzalez, Haney, Kalra, Ortega, Celeste Rodriguez, Schultz, Zbur

Prepared by: Reichel Everhart / AGRI. / (916) 651-1508
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