

Date of Hearing: January 22, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Buffy Wicks, Chair

AB 230 (Ransom) – As Amended January 5, 2026

Policy Committee: Agriculture

Vote: 8 - 0

Urgency: No

State Mandated Local Program: No

Reimbursable: No

SUMMARY:

This bill extends the sunset on the Pierce's Disease Control Program (PDCP) from March 1, 2031, to March 1, 2036, and makes other conforming changes.

FISCAL EFFECT:

Ongoing annual costs to CDFA in the range of \$20 million and \$26 million to continue to administer the PCDP (Pierce's Disease Management Account.) These costs are almost entirely covered by federal funds and industry assessments. However, on occasion, the PDCP has received limited General Fund support. CDFA would incur an additional one-time cost in the tens of thousands of dollars to conduct the board extension referendum, also covered by industry assessments.

COMMENTS:

1) **Purpose.** According to the author:

California produces some of the highest quality grapes found anywhere in the world, and it is thanks to the tireless work of the Pierce's Disease Control Program and the Pierce's Disease/Glassy-winged Sharpshooter Board that our grapevines have been protected against devastating pests for decades. These programs represent a robust public-private partnership between our Department of Food and Agriculture and the producers who rely on the work of the Board to safeguard their harvests from costly outbreaks. AB 230 continues to show our state's commitment to protecting winegrapes from harmful invasive pests and promoting successful initiatives by extending the sunset to 2037.

2) **Background. *Pierce's Disease Control Program.*** According to CDFA, Pierce's Disease (PD) is a lethal disease of grapevines. PD is a serious threat to grapevines throughout the southern United States and is particularly threatening to California's thriving winegrape industry. The bacterial pathogen which causes PD, *Xylella fastidiosa* (Xf), has been present in California for more than a century. While many insects can vector Xf, the establishment and spread of the glassy-winged sharpshooter (GWSS) in California in the 1980s and 1990s created a new and serious threat of significant statewide damage. PDCP works to halt the spread of GWSS until research finds solutions to PD. The program is a partnership that

includes CDFA, county agricultural commissioners, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), the University of California, other state and local agencies, industry, and various agricultural organizations throughout the state.

Funding. Funding for the PDCP comes from three primary sources: USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, California's winegrape growers, and, on occasion, the state's General Fund. The enabling statute for the PDCP requires that any General Fund monies used for research be expended only when the secretary of CDFA has received commitments from non-state sources for at least a 25% match for each state dollar to be expended.

An annual, value-based assessment on winegrapes – set at a maximum rate of \$3 per \$1,000 in value – helps fund the PDCP. The PD/ GWSS Board advises CDFA on the best use of the assessment funds. According to CDFA, the annual assessment rate has averaged \$1.40 per \$1,000 of value and remains steady at \$1.25 for the 2025 harvest, for the fourth year in a row. According to a 2024 CDFA report to the Legislature on the program, in fiscal year 2023-24, the winegrape assessment raised approximately \$5.4 million in revenue for the program, USDA contributed approximately \$16 million, and the state provided approximately \$394,000.

Referendum. As required by statute, the continuation of the PDCP is subject to the approval of California winegrape growers through a referendum. The last referendum, conducted in 2025, passed with 77% approval and extended the program through 2031.

- 3) **Prior Legislation.** AB 1861 (Addis), Chapter 197, Statutes of 2024, among other things, extended the sunset on various provisions of the PDCP from March 1, 2026, to March 1, 2031.

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