An act relating to pest control, and making an appropriation therefor.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL’S DIGEST

AB 2714, as introduced, Cooper. Pest control: Pierce’s disease: funding. Existing law establishes the Pierce’s Disease Control Program in the Department of Food and Agriculture and the Pierce’s Disease Management Account in the Department of Food and Agriculture Fund. This bill would appropriate an unspecified amount from the General Fund to the Pierce’s Disease Management Account in the Department of Food and Agriculture Fund. The bill would also state various findings and declarations of the Legislature relating to, among other things, Pierce’s disease, the California wine industry, and funding the Pierce’s Disease Control Program.


The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

1 SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares all of the following:

2 (a) The California wine industry has an annual economic impact

3 of more than sixty billion dollars ($60,000,000,000) on the state’s
economy and produces the number one finished agricultural product in the state.

(b) The California wine industry creates more than 200,000 jobs, billions in secondary economic activity, preserves agricultural land, open space, and family farms, is a major contributor to the economic vitality of the state, and provides for the overall enhancement of the California lifestyle.

c) However, California wine grape growing and wine production are under attack by a number of pests and diseases, most of which are invasive to California, including the glassy-winged sharpshooter which is a vector of Pierce’s disease, grapevine leafroll disease, red blotch disease, mealybugs, brown marmorated stink bugs, and Virginia creeper leafhoppers.

d) Damage caused by these pests and diseases includes lost product, decreased production, lower crop yield, crop damage, and higher costs on growers generally, resulting in hundreds of millions in lost revenue annually.

e) Recognizing the importance of the California wine industry and the potential for widespread destruction from Pierce’s disease, the Legislature created a task force in 1999 that identified the need to create a statewide eradication and control program for Pierce’s disease and the glassy-winged sharpshooter, and in 2000 created the Pierce’s Disease Control Program within the Department of Food and Agriculture and established a coordinating fund to support research and control efforts.

(f) Additionally, the Legislature created the Pierce’s Disease and Glassy-winged Sharpshooter Board and later extended the authority of the board to designate other pests and diseases to qualify for research and outreach funding.

(g) Historically, the Pierce’s Disease Control Program has been funded by federal, state, and industry sources, including an industry assessment fee, appropriations through the United States Department of Agriculture, and the General Fund.

(h) From 1999 through 2011, the Pierce’s Disease Control Program was seen as a model for how state, federal, and industry funds could be used in collaboration to tackle issues important to agriculture.

(i) For this 12-year period, the state contributed a total of $66,966,034, averaging nearly $5.6 million annually, with a
maximum contribution of $9.4 million in 2001–02, and a minimum
$3.7 million contribution in 2009–10.
(j) However, in 2011–12 the economic downturn forced the
state to cease its investment in the Pierce’s Disease Control
Program, and since this time, the program has been operating solely
on industry and federal funds.
(k) While the Pierce’s Disease Control Program is generating
positive results without state funding, programs have been cut,
and industry funding once used solely for research to develop
long-term solutions is now being used to fund surveillance and
control activities.
(l) As a result, certain aspects of the program focused on
preventing the spread and establishment of the glassy-winged
sharpshooter and the spread of Pierce’s disease have been
diminished, undermining the program’s effectiveness.
(m) Recent years have also seen dramatic increases in the
introduction and spread of invasive pests and diseases affecting
agriculture and communities, which many scientists attribute to
the effects of climate change and the global transport of goods and
people.
(n) In light of increased threats and inadequate resources, the
Pierce’s Disease Control Program and other pest and disease
programs require additional funding to prevent movement and
establishment of pests throughout California.
(o) With an economic recovery well under way, now is the time
to recommit state funding and support to combat Pierce’s disease
and other pests and diseases that affect winegrape production in
the state.
SEC. 2. The sum of ____ dollars ($____) is hereby appropriated
from the General Fund to the Pierce’s Disease Management
Account in the Department of Food and Agriculture Fund, which
was created pursuant to Section 6046 of the Food and Agricultural
Code.