

SENATE BILL REPORT

ESSB 6420

As Passed Senate, February 8, 1996

Title: An act relating to travel by public officers and employees.

Brief Description: Restricting first class and business class travel at public expense.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Government Operations (originally sponsored by Senators Heavey, Roach, Oke, Finkbeiner and Hochstatter).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Government Operations: 1/23/96, 2/1/96 [DPS].
Passed Senate, 2/8/96, 41-8.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6420 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Haugen, Chair; Sheldon, Vice Chair; Goings, Hale, Heavey, McCaslin and Winsley.

Staff: Rod McAulay (786-7754)

Background: There is no statutory restriction on state or local government officers or employees traveling first class or business class on a commercial airline when on official business.

Summary of Bill: A state government officer or employee may not use first class or business class accommodations when traveling on commercial airlines in the discharge of official duties unless as a reasonable accommodation for persons with disabilities or where an emergency warrants such travel.

Local governments must adopt by ordinance or resolution requirements that whenever travel by commercial air carrier is required, the cost incurred may not exceed the fare for coach class. Such ordinances or resolutions may include specific circumstances when business class travel may be authorized.

A local government officer or employee may travel by business class if any single leg of the trip involves a commercial airline flight of at least ten hours, the traveler must engage in official business within 12 hours of arrival, and the business class travel has been authorized by the governing body of the traveler's employer at a public meeting.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: Cities can live with this watered-down version.

Testimony Against: The bill allows ports to use business class on long overseas travel.

Testified: Stan Finkelstein, AWC; Pat Jones, Ports Assn.; Larry Larson, Port of Longview.