
Technology & Economic Development Committee

ESB 6631

Brief Description: Establishing a joint select committee to consider the political, economic, and security issues at Washington's largest ports.

Sponsors: Senators Roach and Chase.

Brief Summary of Engrossed Bill

- Creates a Joint Select Committee on Washington's largest ports (Committee).
- Requires the Committee to report its findings and recommendations to the appropriate committees of the Legislature by December 1, 2016.

Hearing Date: 2/24/16

Staff: Nikkole Hughes (786-7156).

Background:

Port districts were authorized in 1911 for the purpose of constructing harbor improvements, developing rail and terminal facilities, and undertaking other industrial improvements. Ports have the authority to develop marine terminals, airports, and other cargo facilities; establish foreign trade zones; operate or lease marinas; provide environmental protection and enhancement; and provide public access. Among the general powers granted to ports are the following:

- acquire land, property, leases, and easements;
- condemn property and exercise the power of eminent domain;
- develop lands for industrial and commercial uses;
- impose taxes, rates, and other charges;
- sell or otherwise convey rights to property; and
- construct and maintain specified types of park and recreation facilities.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Summary of Bill:

Joint Select Committee on Washington's Largest Ports.

A Joint Select Committee on Washington's largest ports (Committee) is established. The Committee consists of a total of eight legislators. The President of the Senate must appoint as members:

- the chair and ranking member of the Committee on Government Operations and Security; and
- the chair and ranking member of the Committee on Trade and Economic Development.

The Speaker of the House of Representatives must appoint as members:

- the chair and ranking member of the Committee on Local Government; and
- the chair and ranking member of the Committee on Community Development, Housing, and Tribal Affairs.

The Committee must choose two co-chairs, one from the House of Representatives and one from the Senate.

The Committee must develop recommendations that:

- consider the political, economic, and security issues facing Washington's largest ports;
- promote regulatory consistency and certainty in the areas of land use planning, permitting, and business development in a manner that supports Washington's largest ports;
- encourage cooperation and partnership between local, state, federal, and private sectors to foster increased use of Washington's largest ports; and
- identify aspects of state policy that have an impact on Washington's largest ports.

The Committee must report its findings and recommendations to the appropriate committees of the Legislature by December 1, 2016.

Staff support for the Committee must be provided by Senate Committee Services and the Office of Program Research. Members of the Committee are reimbursed for travel expenses, and the expenses of the Committee must be paid jointly by the Senate and the House of Representatives.

Definitions.

The following definitions are established:

"Washington's largest ports" means the two port districts in the state that have the highest annual volume of cargo and any port district bordering the Columbia river in a county with a population under 125,000 with operating revenues over \$30 million a year.

"Washington's largest ports" means the four port districts in the state that had the highest gross operating revenues in 2015.

Expiration Date.

The bill expires December 1, 2016.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.