

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 1917

As of March 28, 2019

Title: An act relating to the use of certain animal traps by airport operators.

Brief Description: Concerning the use of certain animal traps by airport operators.

Sponsors: House Committee on Rural Development, Agriculture, & Natural Resources (originally sponsored by Representatives Peterson and Dent).

Brief History: Passed House: 3/12/19, 92-4.

Committee Activity: Agriculture, Water, Natural Resources & Parks: 3/28/19.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Authorizes a special permit and creates an exemption from the prohibition on the use of body-gripping animal traps for airport operators to trap animals under certain conditions.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, WATER, NATURAL RESOURCES & PARKS

Staff: Jeff Olsen (786-7428)

Background: Use of Body-Gripping Animal Traps. Initiative 713, passed in 2000, made it a gross misdemeanor to use any body-gripping trap to capture any mammal, or to use a leghold trap, neck snare, or other body-gripping trap to capture a mammal for recreation or commerce. The director of the Department of Fish and Wildlife (director) may grant permits to use certain traps in limited circumstances including protection of public health and safety, protection of threatened or endangered species, and wildlife research.

Airport Operators. An airport operator is defined as any municipality, including a city, town, airport district, or port district of the state, or state agency that owns or operates an airport.

Summary of Bill: A new exemption from the prohibition on body-gripping animal traps is added to allow airport operators, under a special permit from the director, to trap an animal to protect human and aviation security. The airport operator must obtain a permit from the director every three years, and must annually report the previous year's trapping activity to

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the director. Airport operators are prohibited from selling, trading, or exchanging fur of any mammal that has been trapped in the state with certain steel-jawed leghold or any other body-gripping traps.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: The bill is proposing more of an administrative timeline change, not a policy change. After the initiative passed, there was an effort to amend the statute to include an exemption for airport operators. Ever since, the airports have completed monthly permits to the Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW), and to date, none have been denied. This approach requires a permit every three years, and an annual report to DFW. Airports are mainly concerned with smaller, fast moving animals like a coyote, that may result in a collision with a small aircraft.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Susie Tracy, Washington Airport Management Assn.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.