

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2609

*As Reported By House Committee on:
Transportation*

Title: An act relating to air transportation.

Brief Description: Making airport expansions consistent with the state air transportation policy plan.

Sponsor(s): Representatives Hine, G. Fisher, R. Fisher, Brough, Heavey, Locke, Chandler, Leonard, Valle, Wood, Prentice, Hochstatter, Mitchell, Horn, Rasmussen, Paris, R. King, Beck, Spanel, Nelson, Appelwick, Wilson, Franklin, Wang, Jacobsen and Belcher.

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Transportation, February 6, 1992, DPS.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
TRANSPORTATION**

Majority Report: *The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass.* Signed by 16 members: Representatives R. Fisher, Chair; R. Meyers, Vice Chair; Chandler, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Brough; Cooper; G. Fisher; Heavey; R. Johnson; Jones; Kremen; Mitchell; Orr; Prentice; Prince; Schmidt; and Wood.

Minority Report: *Do not pass.* Signed by 10 members: Representatives Betrozoff, Ranking Minority Member; Basich; Cantwell; Day; Forner; Haugen; Horn; P. Johnson; Wilson; and Zellinsky.

Staff: Brian McMorrow (786-7304).

Background: The Air Transportation Commission (ATC) is a 27-member body that is conducting studies to determine Washington State's long-range air transportation policy. The commission's work program will address the following issues: investment in air transportation or other modal alternatives; needs of commercial and general aviation; air transportation economic development tools; air transportation as part of the state's environmental policy goals; air transportation as part of the state's growth management policy; and suitability of existing governance structures.

The ATC will submit its findings and recommendations to the Legislative Transportation Committee by December 1, 1994, with an interim report by December 1992.

The Puget Sound Air Transportation Committee (PSATC) is a 36-member committee responsible for addressing the air capacity needs of Sea-Tac airport. The Committee's project, known as "Flight Plan," is sponsored by the Puget Sound Regional Council and the Port of Seattle. After two years of work the committee has selected as its preferred alternative a multiple airport system, which will be implemented in phases:

- 1) Add a new air carrier runway at Sea-Tac (1995-2000).
- 2) Initiate commercial service at Paine Field (1995-2000).
- 3) Add a supplemental airport after 2010 at one of the following:
 - a) Ft. Lewis or McChord if military coordination can be achieved;
 - b) Ft. Lewis East if airspace coordination can be resolved; or
 - c) Olympia/Black Lake if no military sharing is possible.

Currently, the public is reviewing the PSATC's findings, supporting material and draft programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Construction of the new runway would begin no earlier than 1996.

The State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) requires public entities, whose actions may significantly affect the environment, to prepare a detailed environmental impact statement. The SEPA process may involve several steps including: Determining probable impact on the environment; mitigating adverse impacts on the environment; and preparing a document identifying potential areas of impact.

Summary of Substitute Bill: The Legislature finds that it cannot permit any public port, especially one with assets critical to the state's economy, to make substantial capital improvements to its air transportation facilities without making certain that the port's plan is consistent with the needs of the state as expressed in its air transportation policy.

Political subdivisions and municipal corporations are prohibited from constructing a runway of 1,000 or more feet before the Air Transportation Commission (ATC) submits its final report to the Legislative Transportation Committee.

The ATC must review the final draft of the Puget Sound Air Transportation Committee's "Flight Plan" report in light of

its policy recommendations. It must review the environmental, social and economic costs associated with expansion and operation of Washington State's air transportation system. The commission must also assess the effectiveness and reasonableness of mitigation practices related to airport expansion, and recommend appropriate changes.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: Political subdivisions and municipal corporations may not construct a runway of 1,000 or more feet or extend a runway until the Air Transportation Commission (ATC) submits its final report to the Legislative Transportation Committee (LTC). The original bill prohibited ports from constructing a runway of 1,000 or more feet until the ATC submits its final report to the LTC.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date of Substitute Bill: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

Testimony For: The bill would prevent the Port of Seattle from expanding Sea-Tac airport and further diminishing the quality of life in surrounding neighborhoods.

Testimony Against: Any prohibition against expansion at Sea-Tac would adversely affect the region's economy and prevent the Port of Seattle from providing a timely response to a serious shortage in airport capacity.

Witnesses: Richard Kennedy, Mayor of Des Moines (pro); Kathy Parker, citizen (pro); Rick Arambaru, attorney for citizens against third runway at Sea-Tac (pro); Paul Barden, King County Council (pro); Bob Wallace, Puget Sound Air Transportation Committee (con); Andrea Riniker, Port of Seattle (con); Robert Larson, city of Stanwood (con); Bruce Laing, King County Council and Puget Sound Regional Council (con); Bill Ayer, Horizon Airlines (con); Bill Conley, Port of Port Angeles (con); Brad Junkovich, Seattle Chamber of Commerce and Air Washington (con); Chuck Chereghino, Tacoma/Pierce County Chamber of Commerce and Air Washington (con); Tom Burns, Everett Chamber of Commerce and Air Washington (con); Bruce Ittner, citizen (pro); Peter Townsend, Federal Way accountant (pro); Chuck McClellan, TRANEC (pro); and Ed Pina, Highline School Board (pro).