
SENATE BILL 5942

State of Washington

53rd Legislature

1993 Regular Session

By Senators Haugen, Erwin, Skratek and M. Rasmussen

Read first time 03/01/93. Referred to Committee on Trade, Technology & Economic Development.

1 AN ACT Relating to the diversification of the economy of Whidbey
2 Island; creating a new section; and declaring an emergency.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature recognizes that the economic
5 base of Whidbey Island is overly dependent upon congressional
6 appropriations to the Whidbey Island naval air station. Fluctuations
7 in federal appropriations have resulted in a local economy that is
8 unstable and has limited flexibility to respond to important shifts in
9 federal policy. Additionally, many primary jobs in Island county may
10 be prematurely lost if the Whidbey Island naval air station is closed
11 or cut back dramatically. The legislature finds that it is in the best
12 interest of the state and Island county to develop a more balanced and
13 diversified economy that is better able to meet the long-term
14 employment needs of our local citizens.

15 (2) The department of trade and economic development shall perform
16 a study to investigate the state's role in the economic diversification
17 of the Whidbey Island economy. The department may undertake portions
18 of required feasibility studies. The department shall develop the
19 study in conjunction with the department of community development.

1 (3) The study must focus on:

2 (a) The need for programs to train and retrain workers displaced by
3 base closures and to prepare the work force for emerging Northwest
4 industries;

5 (b) Methods of utilizing the following economic development assets
6 of the North Whidbey area to diversify the economy:

7 (i) The large concentration of technical workers related to the air
8 station;

9 (ii) The extensive infrastructure that has been developed by the
10 military and how the infrastructure's facilities can be transferred
11 into commercial projects in the private sector;

12 (iii) The technological base affiliated with existing jobs;

13 (iv) The availability of land and appropriate real estate;

14 (v) The availability of port, air, rail, and highway
15 transportation;

16 (vi) The possibility of converting current federal facilities into
17 commercial or public use; and

18 (vii) Accessibility to outdoor recreational facilities;

19 (c) Methods of addressing the economic liabilities of North
20 Whidbey, including shipping and transportation, supplies, and sources
21 of capital;

22 (d) Developing potential markets for North Whidbey services and
23 products;

24 (e) The availability of venture capital and other potential funding
25 sources;

26 (f) The commercialization of federally developed facilities and
27 technology by assisting and promoting the transfer of technology into
28 private projects and commercial applications; and

29 (g) The development of a plan to diversify the industrial base of
30 North Whidbey Island.

31 (4) The department of trade and economic development shall consult
32 the following in conducting the study: Island county economic
33 development council; Skagit Valley community college officials; the
34 area chambers of commerce; the area port districts; the city of Oak
35 Harbor; Island county; the United States navy; relevant business
36 leaders; and other relevant state offices within the department of
37 trade and economic development.

38 (5) The department of trade and economic development shall submit
39 a final report with specific recommendations that define measurable

1 goals with time frames to the appropriate standing committees of the
2 legislature by January 1, 1994.

3 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** This act is necessary for the immediate
4 preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the
5 state government and its existing public institutions, and shall take
6 effect immediately.

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