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SENATE BILL 5968

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State of Washington

59th Legislature

2005 Regular Session

By Senators Rasmussen, Morton, Schoesler, Jacobsen, Delvin, Parlette and Mulliken

Read first time 02/17/2005. Referred to Committee on Agriculture & Rural Economic Development.

1 AN ACT Relating to studying the economic and social contribution of  
2 agricultural fairs to Washington state; and creating new sections.

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

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature recognizes that agricultural  
5 fairs and fairgrounds provide numerous economic and social benefits to  
6 Washington state. The enhancements of tourism, promotion of local  
7 commerce, rural economic development, disaster preparedness, and  
8 opportunities for youth are all part of the multifaceted, year-round  
9 fair industry.

10 Fairgrounds host a variety of commercial and social events year  
11 round. They offer educational, cultural, and entertainment events,  
12 promote youth development, and contribute to community cohesiveness.  
13 Fairs and fairgrounds provide community groups with fund-raising  
14 opportunities that, in turn, provide a variety of social benefits to  
15 the community.

16 Participants and attendees contribute to the local economy through  
17 purchase of food, lodging, and supplies. Fair operations also  
18 contribute to the local economy through the purchase of equipment,

1 materials, supplies, advertising, hiring local labor, and numerous  
2 other elements that are related to the operations of the fairgrounds.

3 The best interest of the state is achieved when we encourage all  
4 venues that enhance economic and social viability. Our rural  
5 communities gain from the benefits flowing from the fair industry. It  
6 is the intent of the legislature to quantify the economic and social  
7 impact of fairs on Washington state; to maintain funding mechanisms  
8 that support the capital needs of fairs; and to assess options for new  
9 capital funding sources to support fairs.

10 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** Subject to the availability of funds  
11 appropriated specifically for this purpose, the department of  
12 agriculture shall contract for a study on the economic and social  
13 impact of agricultural fairs on Washington state. This study shall  
14 include, but is not limited to, developing information on (1) the  
15 statewide and local impacts of fairs on employment, business income,  
16 taxes resulting from fair activity, civic and charitable organizations,  
17 youth development, and other business and social benefits, and (2)  
18 needed capital improvements. An advisory group, appointed by the board  
19 of the Washington state fairs association, will help guide the study.  
20 The advisory group will include, but is not limited to, a staff person  
21 with expertise in economic analysis from the office of financial  
22 management, the house of representatives, and the senate. The  
23 department shall submit the report to the office of financial  
24 management and the appropriate committees of the legislature no later  
25 than June 30, 2006.

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