

FINAL BILL REPORT

E2SSB 5955

Brief Description: Mitigating harm and improving equity in large port districts.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Keiser, Hasegawa, Kauffman, Nguyen and Wilson, C.).

Senate Committee on Local Government, Land Use & Tribal Affairs

Senate Committee on Ways & Means

House Committee on Local Government

House Committee on Capital Budget

Background: Noise abatement programs generally focus on reducing the noise produced by aircraft while on the ground, during takeoffs and landings, and during flights over populated areas.

A port district that operates an airport serving more than 900 scheduled jet aircraft flights per day may undertake a program of aircraft noise abatement within impacted areas. Impacted areas are limited to:

- no more than ten miles beyond the paved north end of any runway;
- no more than 13 miles beyond the south end paved end of any runway; or
- no more than two miles from the centerline of any runway extending six miles north and 13 miles south from the paved end of such runway.

The port district may employ remedial programs for noise abatement. Among other items, the aircraft noise abatement program may include the purchasing of property, transaction assistance—assistance for selling a home, soundproofing structures, and mortgage insurance for private landowners who are unable to obtain mortgage insurance due to the noise impact.

A port district may establish a fund for the purposes of the noise abatement program. The fund may be financed by the proceeds of any grants or loans made by federal agencies, rentals, charges and other revenues related to the noise abatement program, airport revenues, and revenue bonds based upon such revenues.

Summary: The Port District Equity Fund is created in the custody of the state treasury for

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the purpose of providing grants to port districts to supplement noise mitigation programming. Moneys to the account may consist of appropriations by the Legislature, contributions from county and local governments and port districts, and private contributions. Only the director of the Department of Commerce (Commerce) or the director's designee may authorize expenditures from the account. A port district may commit to matching, from port district funds, at least one-half of the total funding provided by the Legislature for purposes of noise mitigation.

Commerce must administer the grant program to provide assistance to port districts for expenses related to noise mitigation. A qualifying port district, defined as a port district authorized to undertake noise abatement programs, may apply to the port district equity fund for resources to facilitate the assessment and inspection of sound mitigation equipment that is no longer working or is reported to have caused additional hazards or structural damage to the property.

A qualifying port district may contract with building inspectors or other professionals with experience in sound testing, or window and door installs, or may enter into an interlocal agreement with the county in which it is located for the provision of building inspectors or professionals with experience in sound testing, or window and door installs to determine whether package failure resulted in additional hazards or structural damage to the property. Any expense incurred by the county related to contracting of a building inspector or professional may be reimbursed by the port district. The port district may use grant funds from the port district equity fund to reimburse the county for these expenses. If a building inspector or other professional identifies that a property's noise mitigation equipment is no longer working as intended, the port district must apply to the grant program for resources to repair or replace existing noise mitigation equipment or address related hazards or damages.

Commerce must prepare and publish an annual report on its website detailing grants made under the Port District Equity Fund. The report must include:

- the number of qualified building inspectors or other professionals contracted;
- the number of inspections conducted;
- the number of properties provided with new or improved noise mitigation equipment subsequent to an inspection;
- the number of properties receiving funds to address hazards or damages proven by an inspection to be associated with the installation of noise mitigation equipment; and
- the number of inspected properties where no repairs occurred and the reasons why.

The grant program to provide assistance to qualifying port districts for expenses related to noise mitigation terminates July 1, 2029 with a sunset review by the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee (JLARC). In addition to the standard review, JLARC must include the number of homes remediated and the number of homes remaining in need of noise mitigation remediation. The grant program and Port District Equity Fund are repealed effective July 1, 2030.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate 49 0

House 83 13

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