
SENATE BILL 6428

State of Washington

55th Legislature

1998 Regular Session

By Senators Kohl, Wojahn, Thibaudeau, Patterson, Wood, Winsley,
B. Sheldon, Schow, Heavey, Franklin, Fairley and Fraser

Read first time 01/19/98. Referred to Committee on Health & Long-Term
Care.

1 AN ACT Relating to the health effects of noise; and creating new
2 sections.

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

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature finds that:

5 (a) High levels of ambient noise may cause adverse auditory and
6 nonauditory effects, including hearing loss, communication and sleep
7 disturbance, increasing stress levels, and adversely impacting cardio-
8 vascular and endocrine systems;

9 (b) Noise impacts are a function not only of the level of sound but
10 the duration of exposure to high levels of sound and the distance from
11 the noise source;

12 (c) Research indicates that, for example, exposure to noise of
13 ninety decibels or more for eight hours may cause damage, and exposure
14 to one hundred five-decibel noise for an hour or more may cause damage;

15 (d) The decibel levels of common sources of noise include:

16 (i) Jet take-off (one hundred thirty decibels);

17 (ii) Fireworks (one hundred thirty decibels);

18 (iii) Amplified rock music (one hundred twenty decibels);

19 (iv) Jackhammer (one hundred twenty decibels);

- 1 (v) Chain saw (one hundred decibels);
- 2 (vi) Lawnmower (eighty-five to one hundred decibels);
- 3 (vii) Seaplane (eighty to one hundred ten decibels);
- 4 (viii) Dirt bike (ninety-five decibels); and
- 5 (ix) Portable stereo (ninety-five decibels);

6 (e) With increasing population and increasing sources of noise,
7 more Washingtonians are exposed for longer periods to high noise
8 levels;

9 (f) The scientific research into the health effects of noise
10 exposure has advanced greatly in the recent past and state and local
11 programs should be reviewed in light of this research; and

12 (g) The state noise program, including technical assistance to
13 implementing local governments, has not been comprehensively reviewed
14 since its initiation nearly twenty-five years ago.

15 (2) Therefore the legislature intends by this act to authorize a
16 comprehensive review of current research studies on the health effects
17 of noise and a review of current state and local noise programs in
18 order to provide greater understanding of opportunities to strengthen
19 such programs as well as further public education regarding the health
20 effects of noise.

21 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** By January 1, 1999, the department of health
22 shall provide to the appropriate committees of the senate and the house
23 of representatives an assessment of the health effects of noise and
24 recommendations for reducing such effects. The study shall include:

25 (1) A review of the literature on the effects of noise, with an
26 emphasis upon more contemporary research completed in the previous two
27 decades, subsequent to the authorization of the state's noise control
28 program in 1974. The review shall include review of the research
29 findings on direct auditory effects, as well as nonauditory effects
30 such as sleep and communication disturbance, and stress effects;

31 (2) An assessment of the principal noise sources in Washington
32 communities and trends in cumulative noise levels in representative
33 urban, suburban, and rural areas;

34 (3) A review of the current noise control programs at the state and
35 local level, including public education and compliance activities;

36 (4) A review of federal noise control laws and programs and
37 regulatory subjects preempted by federal laws;

1 (5) A review of existing studies concerning whether disadvantaged
2 groups have a disproportionately higher exposure to unhealthy noise
3 levels; and

4 (6) Recommendations for improving state and local noise control
5 programs to address the health effects identified and for more
6 effective administration of existing programs, including state
7 financial and technical assistance to local governments.

8 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** (1) In conducting the noise study required
9 by section 2 of this act, the department of health shall form an
10 advisory committee including representatives of community organizations
11 concerned with noise, industries characterized by high noise levels,
12 motorized vehicle manufacturers, transportation facilities, and
13 scientific research interests. The department may retain independent
14 consultants for technical elements of health effects analyses.

15 (2) The department shall provide for public participation in the
16 development of the report, including one or more public forums and the
17 provision of an opportunity for public review and comment upon a draft
18 report.

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