

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5859

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As of February 17, 2005

**Title:** An act relating to department of transportation farmland preservation efforts concerning certain transportation projects.

**Brief Description:** Mitigating loss of farmland.

**Sponsors:** Senators Haugen and Rasmussen.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Transportation:

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

**Staff:** Dalene Sprick (786-7321)

**Background:** Under current law, counties, cities, and towns planning under the Growth Management Act are to designate, where appropriate, agricultural lands that are not already characterized by urban growth and have a long-term significance for the commercial production of food or other agricultural products.

**Summary of Bill:** Whenever the Department of Transportation (DOT) secures land or interest in lands by eminent domain for the purpose of constructing or improving a state highway or other facility, and that land is designated as agricultural land of long-term significance, the DOT must pay a farmland mitigation fee. This fee must be used to purchase development rights to an equivalent amount of agricultural land of comparable or better quality soil in the county. The farmland mitigation fee is restricted to transportation projects in a county administering a farmland preservation program that allows for the purchase of development rights from willing sellers. Furthermore, the fee is to be calculated by the respective county and must conform with the current values being paid by the county's farmland preservation program.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on February 15, 2005.

**Committee/Commission/Task Force Created:** No.

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