
Environment Committee

HB 1171

Brief Description: Directing the completion of a study of certain environmental impacts, including ultrafine particulate emissions, associated with aircraft traffic in areas impacted by airport operations.

Sponsors: Representatives Orwall, Fitzgibbon, Gregerson, Tarleton, Pollet and Santos.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Directs the Department of Commerce to contract with the University of Washington School of Public Health in completing a two-phase study of environmental impacts, including ultrafine particulate matter air pollution, associated with airport traffic at the state's busiest airport.
- Requires an initial report on the first phase of the study addressing ultrafine particulate matter air pollution, to be submitted to the Legislature by December 1, 2019, and requires a subsequent report to the Legislature on certain other environmental and social impacts of airport traffic by December 1, 2021.

Hearing Date: 1/24/17

Staff: Jacob Lipson (786-7196).

Background:

Washington hosts more than a dozen international airports that have customs and immigration facilities that allow them to regularly accept international flights, plus several additional airports that can accommodate international arrivals if an incoming flight obtains prior permission to land. According to the U.S. Department of Transportation's Bureau of Transportation Statistics, Seattle-Tacoma International Airport is the busiest airport in the state, handling over 178,000 departures in 2016.

Federal and state clean air laws establish two classifications of particulate matter air pollution for purposes of setting air quality standards: coarse particulate matter (PM10), which includes

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particulate matter that is less than 10 microns in diameter; and fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}), which includes particulate matter that is less than 2.5 microns in diameter. Federal and state clean air laws do not define or set standards specifically for ultrafine particulate matter.

Summary of Bill:

The Department of Commerce (Commerce) is directed to complete a study of air quality implications of aircraft traffic at the international airport in the state that has the highest total annual number of arrivals and departures. This study must be completed in two phases, and requires the submission of a report to the Legislature on each phase of the study.

The first phase of the study directs Commerce to contract with the University of Washington School of Public Health to monitor concentrations and characteristics of ultrafine particulate matter in areas impacted by high volumes of airport traffic. The evaluation must attempt to distinguish between aircraft and other sources of ultrafine particulate matter the evaluation must also compare concentrations of ultrafine particulate matter in areas impacted by airport traffic with other locations featuring similar characteristics except for proximity to a busy airport. The first phase of the study is to be completed by September 1, 2019, and report is due to the Legislature by December 1 of that year summarizing findings on the prevalence of ultrafine particulate matter in areas adjacent to and directly impacted by airport operations.

The second phase of the study, which is to be initiated upon completion of the first phase, directs Commerce to analyze:

- the costs and feasibility of options to reduce or mitigate ultrafine particulate matter emissions;
- rates of exposure to ultrafine particulate matter in any disproportionately impacted communities;
- risks of ultrafine particulate matter pollution compared to risks posed by other sources or types of air pollution; and
- other environmental impacts associated with increased volumes of air traffic at the airport, including noise pollution, aesthetics, and wildlife habitat.

By December 1, 2021, Commerce must submit a second, updated report to the Legislature which includes findings on health impacts from ultrafine particulate matter and recommendations on mitigating ultrafine particulate matter emissions while allowing for continued growth of air traffic at the airport.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.