

HOUSE BILL REPORT

2SSB 5362

As Reported by House Committee On:
Appropriations

Title: An act relating to ensuring the funding of agricultural fairs.

Brief Description: Ensuring the funding of agricultural fairs.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators McCune and Warnick).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Appropriations: 3/18/21, 3/22/21 [DPA].

**Brief Summary of Second Substitute Bill
(As Amended By Committee)**

- Increases the amount of State General Fund transferred into the Fair Fund, over the course of several years, from \$2 million per fiscal year to \$4 million per fiscal year.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Majority Report: Do pass as amended. Signed by 33 members: Representatives Ormsby, Chair; Bergquist, Vice Chair; Gregerson, Vice Chair; Macri, Vice Chair; Stokesbary, Ranking Minority Member; Chambers, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Corry, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; MacEwen, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Boehnke, Caldier, Chandler, Chopp, Cody, Dolan, Dye, Fitzgibbon, Frame, Hansen, Harris, Hoff, Jacobsen, Johnson, J., Lekanoff, Pollet, Rude, Ryu, Schmick, Senn, Springer, Steele, Stonier, Sullivan and Tharinger.

Staff: Dan Jones (786-7118).

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Background:

The Fair Fund is a non-appropriated state fund administered by the Washington State Department of Agriculture. The Fair Fund is used for assisting agricultural fairs in Washington that have conducted at least two successful consecutive annual fairs. The State Treasurer must transfer \$2 million from the State General Fund into the Fair Fund each fiscal year.

Summary of Amended Bill:

The State Treasurer must transfer the following amounts from the State General Fund into the Fair Fund each fiscal year:

- Fiscal Year 2021: \$2 million;
- Fiscal Year 2022 and 2023: \$2.75 million;
- Fiscal Year 2024 and 2025: \$3.50 million; and
- Fiscal Year 2026 and each subsequent fiscal year: \$4 million.

A portion of the additional funds provided to fairs as a result of the bill must be prioritized to be spent on educational programs and outreach that are reflective of the diversity within a fair's local population.

Amended Bill Compared to Second Substitute Bill:

The amended bill adds the requirement regarding educational programs and outreach.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) The funding transferred into the Fair Fund has not been increased in 20 years. Costs to fairs have increased during that time. Fairs are a part of their area's story, and provide educational opportunities around agriculture and food production. Fairs help young people become respectful adults with a good work ethic. Small fairs would not survive without the Fair Fund. Fairs provide multiple benefits, and fairgrounds are used for other services such as food distribution and COVID-19 testing.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Senator McCune, prime sponsor; Christopher Pickering, Northwest Washington Fair; Jim McKiernan, Grant County Fairgrounds; Andrea Thayer, Washington State Fairs Association; Erin Gurtel, Spokane County Interstate Fair; and Michelle Bennett, Pierce County Fair.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.