
HOUSE BILL 2703

State of Washington

61st Legislature

2010 Regular Session

By Representatives Takko, Haler, Blake, Herrera, Lias, Hurst, Klippert, Schmick, Smith, Pearson, Sullivan, Van De Wege, Williams, Dammeier, McCune, Conway, Morrell, and Campbell

Read first time 01/12/10. Referred to Committee on Judiciary.

1 AN ACT Relating to protecting sport shooting ranges; adding a new
2 section to chapter 9.41 RCW; creating a new section; and declaring an
3 emergency.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that sport shooting
6 ranges in this state offer valuable hunter and firearm safety training,
7 offer legitimate and important forms of recreation to the general
8 public, and provide the opportunity for many law enforcement agencies
9 to maintain necessary firearms skills efficiently and at little or no
10 cost. The continued existence and viability of sport shooting ranges
11 is impacted by burdensome retroactive regulation and lawsuits, thereby
12 potentially threatening the availability of low-cost firearms training
13 to some local law enforcement agencies, as well as hunter and firearms
14 safety training and recreation to the general public.

15 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 9.41 RCW
16 to read as follows:

17 (1)(a) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a person who
18 operates or uses a sport shooting range in this state shall not be

1 subject to civil liability or criminal prosecution in any matter
2 relating to noise or noise pollution resulting from the operation or
3 use of the range if the range is in compliance with any noise control
4 laws or ordinances that applied to the range and its operation at the
5 date of construction or initial operation of the range.

6 (b) A person who operates or uses a sport shooting range is not
7 subject to an action for nuisance, and a court of the state shall not
8 enjoin the use or operation of a range on the basis of noise or noise
9 pollution, if the range is in compliance with any noise control laws or
10 ordinances that applied to the range and its operation at the date of
11 construction or initial operation of the range.

12 (c) Rules adopted by any state department or agency for limiting
13 levels of noise in terms of decibel level that may occur in the outdoor
14 atmosphere do not apply to a sport shooting range exempted from
15 liability under this section.

16 (2) A person who acquires title to or who owns real property
17 adversely affected by the use of property with a permanently located
18 and improved sport shooting range shall not maintain a nuisance action
19 against the person who owns the range to restrain, enjoin, or impede
20 the use of the range where there has not been a substantial change in
21 the nature of the use of the range. This subsection does not prohibit
22 actions for negligence or recklessness in the operation of the range or
23 by a person using the range.

24 (3) A sport shooting range that is operated and is not in violation
25 of existing law at the time of the enactment of an ordinance must be
26 permitted to continue in operation even if the operation of the sport
27 shooting range at a later date does not conform to the new ordinance or
28 an amendment to an existing ordinance.

29 (4) A person who participates in sport shooting at a sport shooting
30 range accepts the risks associated with the sport to the extent the
31 risks are obvious and inherent. Those risks include, but are not
32 limited to, injuries that may result from noise, discharge of a
33 projectile or shot, malfunction of sport shooting equipment not owned
34 by the shooting range, natural variations in terrain, surface or
35 subsurface snow or ice conditions, bare spots, rocks, trees, and other
36 forms of natural growth or debris.

37 (5) Except as otherwise provided in this section, this section does

1 not prohibit a local government from regulating the location and
2 construction of a sport shooting range after the effective date of this
3 act.

4 (6) As used in this section:

5 (a) "Local government" means a county, city, or town.

6 (b) "Person" means an individual, proprietorship, partnership,
7 corporation, club, or other legal entity.

8 (c) "Sport shooting range" or "range" means an area designed and
9 operated for the use of rifles, shotguns, pistols, silhouettes, skeet,
10 trap, black powder, or any other similar sport shooting.

11 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** This act is necessary for the immediate
12 preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the
13 state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect
14 immediately.

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