

The Florida Senate
BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Committee on Community Affairs

BILL: SB 1172

INTRODUCER: Senator Sobel

SUBJECT: Conveyance of Property Taken by Eminent Domain

DATE: March 24, 2014

REVISED: _____

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	Stearns	Yeatman	CA	Pre-meeting
2.			JU	
3.			RC	

I. Summary:

SB 1172 authorizes the state or a political subdivision to convey, without restriction, condemned property to a private party if that property is near a large hub airport and the property was condemned under certain conditions and for specified purposes.

II. Present Situation:

Constitutional Provisions on Takings

The Fifth Amendment of the United States Constitution applies to the states through the Fourteenth Amendment and provides, in part: “nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation.”¹

Similarly, the Florida Constitution states that: “No private property shall be taken except for a public purpose and with full compensation therefor paid to each owner or secured by deposit in the registry of the court and available to the owner.”²

There is no absolute definition of what constitutes a public use. The conception changes along with evolutions of societal norms and changed “circumstances brought about by an increase in population and new modes of communication and transportation.”³ In situations involving the conferral of both private and public benefits by a condemnation, the determination of whether the condemnation was for a public use may turn on whether the public benefits are of a primary or an incidental character.⁴ An incidental benefit to a private party does not render a taking invalid so long as the primary benefit is to the public.

¹ U.S.C.A. CONST. AMEND V.

² FLA. CONST., art. X., s. 6(a).

³ 21 Fla. Jur 2d Eminent Domain s. 27, *Generally; public purpose distinguished* (2014).

⁴ 21 Fla. Jur 2d Eminent Domain s. 29, *Purpose partly public and partly private; incidental private use or benefit* (2014).

Florida Law on Eminent Domain

Florida affords generous treatment to private property owners, or defendants in eminent domain proceedings. In Florida, the owner is entitled to full and fair compensation.⁵ Compensation is generally the payment of the fair market value of the property.⁶ Fair market value is considered to be based upon what a willing buyer would pay to a willing seller.⁷ Also, the petitioner must always pay attorney's fees and reasonable costs to the defendant.⁸ Reasonable costs include appraisal fees and, if business damages are involved, an accountant's fee.⁹ Defendants also have the right to a jury trial.¹⁰

Eminent domain is effected in one of two ways. The first is through the traditional eminent domain process, which involves the filing of a petition for condemnation and, if the property owner challenges the action, a jury trial.¹¹ The second process, called a "quick taking," occurs when the governmental entity files a declaration of taking (containing a good faith estimate of the value of the property) and takes immediate possession of the property before the completion of the judicial procedure.¹² A "taking" of property is considered to result from a physical invasion or a regulatory imposition.¹³

Restrictions on the Conveyance of Condemned Property to Private Parties

The state may not authorize the taking of private property solely for another private party's private use, even if the state pays full compensation for the condemned property.¹⁴ Neither the state nor any political subdivision may convey a property taken by condemnation to a private entity, unless the conveyance meets the requirements of certain statutory exceptions.¹⁵ These exceptions include properties condemned for:

- Use in common carrier services or systems;
- Use as a road or other right-of-way;
- Use in providing utility services or systems; and
- Use in providing public infrastructure.

There are also statutory restrictions on the subsequent conveyance of a condemned property that has already been conveyed to a private party. If ownership of a condemned property is conveyed to a private party pursuant to one of the statutory exceptions described above and at least 10 years have elapsed since the condemning authority acquired title to the property, then the property may be transferred again to another private party after public notice and competitive

⁵ Debra Herman and Jorge Martinez-Esteve, *The Admissibility of Dedication Requirements in Condemnation Cases: No Longer the Road Less Traveled*, 85 Nov. FLA. B.J. 20, 21 (Nov. 2011).

⁶ *Id.*

⁷ *Id.*

⁸ Section 73.091(1), F.S.

⁹ *Id.*

¹⁰ Section 73.071(1), F.S.

¹¹ Sections 73.031(1) and 73.071(1), F.S.

¹² Section 74.031, F.S.

¹³ *Alachua Land Investors, LLC v. City of Gainesville*, 2013 WL 363376, at *2 (Fla. 1st DCA 2013).

¹⁴ 21 Fla. Jur 2d Eminent Domain s. 25, *Taking for private use restricted* (2014).

¹⁵ Section 73.013(1), F.S.

bidding (unless otherwise provided by general law).¹⁶ If less than 10 years have elapsed since the condemning authority acquired title to the property, the property may be conveyed a second time if the current titleholder certifies that the property is no longer needed for the use for which the property was originally condemned, and the owner from whom the property was taken by eminent domain is given the opportunity to repurchase the property at the price received from the condemning authority.¹⁷ Two statutory exceptions that substitute the condemning authority for the certifying party or the current titleholder operate similarly.¹⁸

Large Hub Airports

According to the Federal Aviation Administration, a “large hub airport” is a public use airport that serves civil aviation and accounts for 1 percent or more of annual national passenger boardings.¹⁹ There are four large hub airports in Florida: Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport, Miami International Airport, Orlando International Airport, and Tampa International Airport.²⁰

The National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems is overseen by the United States Secretary of Transportation.²¹ The plan is designed to ensure a “safe, efficient, and integrated system of public-use airports adequate to anticipate and meet the needs of civil aeronautics, to meet the national defense requirements of the Secretary of Defense, and to meet identified needs of the United States Postal Service.”²²

The state of Florida and its political subdivisions have the authority to condemn property when necessary for air approach protection.²³ A county’s taking of only residential property (but not similarly situated commercial property) serves a valid public purpose when the residential property is condemned “because the airport zoning laws indicate that residential construction in areas exceeding certain noise level requirements is an incompatible use, and testimony indicates that the parcels taken meet the requirements for incompatible use.”²⁴

Appendix A of 14 C.F.R. part 150 regulates “noise exposure maps” related to airports. A noise exposure map is a “scaled, geographic depiction of an airport, its noise contours, and surrounding area...”²⁵ Appendix A establishes a uniform methodology for the development and preparation of airport noise exposure maps. It also identifies land uses that are considered to be compatible with various exposures of individuals to noise around airports. Residential land uses are not recommended for areas with an average noise exposure above 65 decibels.

¹⁶ Section 73.013(2)(a), F.S.

¹⁷ Section 73.013(2)(b), F.S.

¹⁸ Sections 73.013(1)(f) and (g), F.S.

¹⁹ Federal Aviation Administration, *Airport Categories – Airports*, available at,

http://www.faa.gov/airports/planning_capacity/passenger_allcargo_stats/categories/ (last visited March 21, 2014).

²⁰ Wikipedia, *List of airports in Florida*, available at, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_airports_in_Florida (last visited March 21, 2014).

²¹ 49 U.S.C. s. 47103.

²² *Id.*

²³ Section 333.12, F.S.

²⁴ 21 Fla. Jur 2d Eminent Domain s. 31, *Airports* (2014).

²⁵ 14 C.F.R. s. 150.7.

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

Section 1 authorizes the state or a political subdivision to convey a condemned property without restriction to a private party if the property is near a large hub airport and the property was condemned pursuant to:

- A noise mitigation program; or a
- A noise compatibility program; and
- The property was condemned on the basis:
 - That the property is deemed incompatible with residential land use under the standards provided in Appendix A of 14 CFR part 150;
 - Of noise mitigation measures; or
 - Of measures required for the safety utility, or efficiency of an airport identified in a Record of Decision or other evaluation issued by the Federal Aviation Administration in connection with an airport development project.

This authority only applies to large hub airports identified in the National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems prepared in accordance with 49 U.S.C. s. 47103.

Section 2 provides an effective date of July 1, 2014.

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

D. Other Constitutional Issues:

The Florida Constitution prohibits the conveyance of private property taken by eminent domain after January 2, 2007 to a private party, unless that conveyance is authorized by a general law passed by 60 percent of the membership of each house of the Legislature.²⁶ The bill authorizes the conveyance of private property taken by eminent domain, therefore it requires a 60 percent vote for final passage.

V. Fiscal Impact Statement:

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

²⁶ FLA. CONST., art. X., s. 6(c).

B. Private Sector Impact:

Florida's eminent domain law requires a condemning authority to pay the owner of the condemned lands full compensation (as opposed to the federally mandated "just compensation"). Therefore, any private owner of condemned lands should not suffer an adverse fiscal impact.

C. Government Sector Impact:

None.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Statutes Affected:

This bill substantially amends section 73.013 of the Florida Statutes.

IX. Additional Information:**A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Changes:**

(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

None.

B. Amendments:

None.