

THE BRIEFING PROJECT – SPECIAL UPDATE “Quality of Life”

Thank you, Commissioners. My name is Steve Edmiston, I live Des Moines. I’m here for The Briefing Project. Beginning in January of 2018, as part of an ongoing documentary film project, over 13 months in 21 total public-comment segments, I attempted to provide a briefing on the *impact on the quality of life* in our airport neighbor communities resulting from aircraft noise and emissions.

So, I am very happy to be here today to support of Resolution No. 3761. Which seeks to add quality of life back into the Port’s mission statement.

You may recall – quality of life was a foundation of nearly every one of my public comments. And you may recall several of my comments discussed that this Commission had deleted all reference to quality of life from the Port’s bylaws in December 2017, which I only discovered after the Port staff had successfully lobbied in 2018 to delete the study of quality of life from the six-city Department of Commerce aviation impact study.

Fixing this deletion of quality of life also became the subject of the very first of ten Port of Seattle Airport Neighbor Community Accords, which have since been endorsed by multiple aviation committees and cities.

I watched the video of the last Commission meeting. I absolutely appreciate and accept President Bowman’s comment that the removal of quality of life was unintentional. And I greatly commend and congratulate Commissioner Felleman on his leadership on this issue.

I also agree with Commissioner Felleman that taking all the time needed to wordsmith is important. This is because the 2017 deletion removed very specific and intentional language – it used to say the Port’s economic mission actually “depends upon” – I’m quoting – “depends upon” – the commitment to environmental stewardship and ensuring a sustainable quality of life. This “depends upon” phrasing is essential because it appropriately positions the concept of “quality of life” as distinct from the mission of economic development. In other words, in this critical context, quality of life is not a synonym of, or byproduct of, economic development.

Quality of life protection is the guardrail.

Recognizing the wisdom of this original distinction will provide clarity of mission – for you, your ED, your airport director, your staff, your other stakeholders, and your citizens.