

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5682

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Transportation, February 25, 2009

Title: An act relating to the realignment of transportation regions.

Brief Description: Requiring the secretary of transportation to realign the transportation regions.

Sponsors: Senators Haugen and Marr.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Transportation: 2/16/09, 2/25/09 [DPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5682 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Haugen, Chair; Swecker, Ranking Minority Member; Becker, Berkey, Delvin, Eide, Jarrett, Kauffman, Kilmer, King and Sheldon.

Staff: Amanda Cecil (786-7429)

Background: The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) is organized administratively into six regions that are generally separated along county boundaries. In addition to the six regions, there is a seventh office that functions similarly to a region office. This office is responsible for delivering major urban transportation projects in the Central Puget Sound area.

The boundaries of these regions are determined by WSDOT.

Summary of Bill (Recommended Substitute): There are currently seven administratively formed transportation regions, including the Urban Corridors Office. The regions are realigned from seven to six regions. This consolidation will result in a 5 percent decrease in the amount of administrative staff by July 1, 2011, and a 10 percent reduction after that.

The newly aligned regions generally include:

- the Olympic Region, containing Clallam, Jefferson, Grays Harbor, Mason, Lewis, Kitsap, and Thurston Counties;

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- the Southwest Region, containing Pacific, Wahkiakum, Cowlitz, Clark, and Skamania Counties;
- the Northwest Region, containing San Juan, Island, Whatcom, and Skagit Counties;
- the Puget Sound Region, containing King, Pierce, and Snohomish Counties;
- the South Central Region, containing Chelan, Douglas, Grant, Kittitas, Yakima, Benton, Franklin, and Klickitat Counties, with a connection into Walla Walla County along state route 12 to the Tri-Cities area; and
- the Eastern Region, containing Okanogan, Ferry, Stevens, Pend Oreille, Lincoln, Spokane, Adams, Whitman, Columbia, Garfield, and Asotin Counties, and that portion of Walla Walla County not included above.

EFFECT OF CHANGES MADE BY TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE (Recommended Substitute): This bill was changed in committee to add language that acknowledges that there are currently seven regions and that one is being eliminated. In recognizing that a region will be eliminated there will be an attendant reduction in regional staffing levels of 5 percent by July 1, 2011, and a reduction of 10 percent after July 1, 2011.

The alignment of the regions were also changed from:

- the Olympic Region, containing Clallam, Jefferson, Grays Harbor, Mason, Pacific, Lewis, Wahkiakum, Cowlitz, Clark, Skamania, and Kitsap Counties and the portion of Thurston County west of Interstate 5;
- the Northwest Region, containing San Juan, Island, Whatcom, and Skagit Counties and the portion of Snohomish County that includes and is north of Smokey Point;
- the Puget Sound Region, containing King and Pierce Counties and the portion of Thurston County that includes and is east of Interstate 5 and the portion of Snohomish County that is south of Smokey Point;
- the Central Region, containing Okanogan, Chelan, Douglas, Grant, Kittitas, Yakima, and Klickitat Counties; and
- the Eastern Region, containing Ferry, Stevens, Pend Oreille, Lincoln, Spokane, Adams, Whitman, Franklin, Benton, Walla Walla, Columbia, Garfield, and Asotin Counties.

to:

- the Olympic Region, containing Clallam, Jefferson, Grays Harbor, Mason, Lewis, Kitsap, and Thurston Counties;
- the Southwest Region, containing Pacific, Wahkiakum, Cowlitz, Clark, and Skamania Counties;
- the Northwest Region, containing San Juan, Island, Whatcom, and Skagit Counties;
- the Puget Sound Region, containing King, Pierce, and Snohomish Counties;
- the South Central Region, containing Chelan, Douglas, Grant, Kittitas, Yakima, Benton, Franklin, and Klickitat Counties, with a connection into Walla Walla County along state route 12 to the Tri-Cities area; and
- the Eastern Region, containing Okanogan, Ferry, Stevens, Pend Oreille, Lincoln, Spokane, Adams, Whitman, Columbia, Garfield, and Asotin Counties, and that portion of Walla Walla County not included above.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Original Bill: CON: Inefficiencies are created in the way the regional planning council reports to the regions by splitting Thurston County.

OTHER: WSDOT presented suggestions for how a regional consolidation could be better aligned.

Persons Testifying: CON: Lon Wyrick, Thurston Regional Planning Council.

OTHER: David Dye, WSDOT.