HOUSE BILL REPORT
ESB 5432

As Reported By House Committee on:
Transportation

Title: An act relating to traffic safety programs.

Brief Description: Funding programs from the public safety and education account.

Sponsor(s): Senators Patterson, Vognild, Snyder, Skratek, Hansen, Oke, Madsen, McMullen, von Reichbauer, Thorsness and Conner; by request of Legislative Transportation Committee.

Brief History:
  Reported by House Committee on:
    Transportation, April 4, 1991, DP.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: *Do pass.* Signed by 23 members: Representatives R. Fisher, Chair; R. Meyers, Vice Chair; Betrozoff, Ranking Minority Member; Chandler, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Basich; Cantwell; Cooper; Day; G. Fisher; Forner; Horn; P. Johnson; R. Johnson; Jones; Kremen; Mitchell; Orr; Prentice; Prince; Schmidt; Wilson; Wood; and Zellinsky.

Minority Report: *Do not pass.* Signed by 2 members: Representatives Brough and Haugen.

Staff: Roger Horn (786-7839).

Background: The Public Safety and Education Account (PSEA) contains the state's portion of penalties and assessments collected by the courts. For the 1991-93 biennium, about $85 million in new revenue will be deposited in the PSEA, of which about three-fourths will be from traffic-related offenses.

Currently there are a number of programs that qualify for appropriations from the PSEA within the General Fund. The eligible programs and/or agencies constitute a wide range of activities in state government. For instance, the Crime Victims' Compensation Program within Labor and Industries, the Judicial Information System for the administrator for the courts and the Driver Improvement Program at the

Department of Licensing qualify, as do many other programs and/or agencies.

Summary of Bill: Starting with the 1993-95 biennium, the revenue currently going to the Public Safety and Education Account (PSEA) shall be divided into two separate accounts. Seventy percent shall go to the current PSEA for crime victims' compensation, the Judicial Information System, and other currently authorized purposes. The remaining 30 percent shall be deposited in a newly-created Traffic Safety and Enforcement Account which shall be used exclusively for transportation purposes, including high school driver training, traffic safety education, highway safety, the Safety Education Officer Program, commercial vehicle enforcement, and other traffic safety and enforcement programs.

The House Appropriations, Senate Ways and Means, and Legislative Transportation committees will perform a study of the sources and uses of PSEA revenue and make recommendations to the Legislature by July 1, 1992.

Fiscal Note: Requested March 26, 1991.

Effective Date: Sections 1 and 2 shall take effect July 1, 1993.

Testimony For: Reimbursement per student for high school traffic safety education has decreased since the PSEA was established in 1985. Traffic safety education will be more fairly evaluated if funding is from an account dedicated to traffic safety and other transportation purposes. The study element in the bill will help to prioritize uses of PSEA funds.

Testimony Against: No changes should be made in the structure of the PSEA until a study of PSEA uses has been performed. Putting revenue into a new dedicated account will jeopardize funding for programs such as crime victims' compensation, the Judicial Information System, and criminal justice training.

Witnesses: Nickie Moran, Labor & Industries (con); Clyde McBrayer, Washington Traffic Safety Education Association (pro); Gary Bloomfield, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (pro); Mike Redman, Washington Association of Prosecuting Attorneys (supports study of funding mechanism; opposes change of distribution formula); Jim GochÀ, Washington Association of County Officials (supports study; opposes change of distribution formula); Janet McLane, Office of Administrator for the Courts (supports study; opposes change of distribution formula); and Kurt Sharar,

Washington State Association of Counties (supports study; opposes change of distribution formula).