

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6372

AS REPORTED BY COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION, FEBRUARY 10, 1992

Brief Description: Studying pedestrian and bicycle facilities along state route 520.

SPONSORS: Senator Erwin

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6372 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Patterson, Chairman; Nelson, Vice Chairman; von Reichbauer, Vice Chairman; Barr, Conner, Erwin, Hansen, Madsen, McMullen, Oke, Skratek, Snyder, Thorsness, and Vognild.

Staff: Roger Horn (786-7839)

Hearing Dates: February 5, 1992; February 10, 1992

BACKGROUND:

The Evergreen Point Bridge across Lake Washington does not accommodate foot or bicycle traffic. The bridge has two lanes in each direction with no shoulders or sidewalks. To add pedestrian or bicycle access will require widening the bridge or attaching a structure specifically for non-motor modes.

Metro buses currently have bike racks to accommodate about 50 Bellevue-to-Seattle bicycle commuters per day and 25 Seattle-to-Bellevue commuters.

The Department of Transportation is now studying bicycle routes in the SR 520 corridor east of the bridge as part of its study of HOV lanes. The Bridge Division has embarked on a \$10,000 fatal flaw study of a pedestrian/bicycle facility attached to the bridge. If no fatal flaws are identified, the department plans to proceed with a \$30,000 to \$50,000 feasibility study that would identify alternatives and costs.

BIKE520, an organization formed to support bicycle/pedestrian access across the bridge and along SR 520, estimates that about 3,000 University of Washington faculty, staff and students live within a five-mile radius from the east terminus of the bridge.

SUMMARY:

The Department of Transportation shall undertake a study of developing pedestrian and bicycle facilities along SR 520 from the University of Washington to the Redmond vicinity. The department shall coordinate their efforts with the university,

King County, and the cities of Seattle, Bellevue, and Redmond. A report to the Legislative Transportation Committee is due by December 1, 1992. An appropriation of \$25,000 is provided from the transportation fund.

EFFECT OF PROPOSED SUBSTITUTE:

The substitute bill removes the \$25,000 appropriation to the Department of Transportation, requires a cost-benefit analysis as part of the study, and directs DOT to make recommendations regarding the feasibility of collecting tolls or other user fees from bicyclists and pedestrians to help compensate for the cost of a bridge facility dedicated to nonmotor uses.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: available

TESTIMONY FOR:

Bicycle commuting to the University of Washington and businesses on both sides of the lake should be encouraged to reduce bridge traffic and related impacts. Community groups, city councils, private businesses, and other groups endorse providing cross-lake access on SR 520 for nonmotor modes. Federal funding may be available to assist in the cost of building a bridge facility for bicyclists and pedestrians.

TESTIMONY AGAINST:

Too much state highway funding is already spent on bicycle facilities. Bicyclists do not pay user fees.

TESTIFIED: Bill Moritz, BIKE520 (pro); Joe Ganem, Bicycle Federation of Washington (pro); Jim Guenther, Department of Transportation (pro); Chris Leman, Eastlake Community Council (pro); Dick Welsh, self (con)