

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1929

As Reported By House Committee On:
Transportation

Title: An act relating to regional transportation planning organizations.

Brief Description: Adjusting requirements for regional transportation planning organizations.

Sponsors: Representatives R. Fisher, Chappell, Springer, Quall and Johanson.

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Transportation, February 24, 1993, DP.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 24 members: Representatives R. Fisher, Chair; Jones, Vice Chair; Schmidt, Ranking Minority Member; Mielke, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Brough; Brumsickle; Cothorn; Eide; Finkbeiner; Forner; Hansen; Heavey; Horn; Johanson; R. Meyers; Miller; H. Myers; Orr; Patterson; Quall; Sheldon; Shin; Wood; and Zellinsky.

Staff: Gene Baxstrom (786-7303).

Background: The 1990 Growth Management Act authorized the creation of regional transportation planning organizations (RTPOs) through the voluntary association of local governments.

An RTPO must include, at minimum, at least one county; have at least 100,000 in population or include three counties; and have as members all counties within the region and 60 percent of the cities within the region representing at least 75 percent of the city population.

The objective of RTPOs is to enhance transportation planning and coordination both within a county and within regions. Specifically, RTPO duties are: a) to develop, adopt and keep current a regional transportation plan that is consistent with county and city comprehensive plans; and b) to certify that the transportation elements of local comprehensive

plans conform with statutory requirements and are consistent with regional plans.

To date, 14 RTPOs have been formed, including 38 of the state's 39 counties. State financial and technical support is provided to assist with the effort of developing regional transportation plans. While counties have supported the objectives of RTPO formation, certain counties argue that the size requirements for RTPOs have formed counties into groupings which may not reflect common interests.

Summary of Bill: The size requirements for regional transportation planning organizations (RTPOs) are reduced to require that the RTPO have a population of at least 50,000 instead of 100,000 or contain at least two counties instead of three. An exception to these requirements is made in the case of a county consisting entirely of islands and having a population of less than 50,000.

Fiscal Note: Requested February 22, 1993.

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

Testimony For: Reducing size requirements would allow RTPOs to be more closely based on transportation system relationships.

Testimony Against: None.

Witnesses: Charles Howard, Department of Transportation; Dan Snow, Washington State Transit Association; Joe Ganem, Bicycle Federation of Washington and Rails to Trails Conservancy; and Vern Wagar, Washington State Association of Counties.