

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 5744

As Reported By House Committee On:
Transportation

Title: An act relating to streets that are part of the state highway system.

Brief Description: Changing provisions concerning streets that are part of the state highway system.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Senators Haugen, Loveland, Vognild, Winsley and M. Rasmussen).

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Transportation, March 30, 1993, DPA.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass as amended. Signed by 20 members: Representatives R. Fisher, Chair; Brown, Vice Chair; Jones, Vice Chair; Schmidt, Ranking Minority Member; Mielke, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Brumsickle; Cothorn; Eide; Finkbeiner; Forner; Fuhrman; Hansen; J. Kohl; Miller; H. Myers; Quall; Sheldon; Shin; Wood; and Zellinsky.

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

Staff: Jeff Doyle (786-7322).

Background: Certain city streets are designated as part of the state highway system. The jurisdiction and control of these streets is defined in statute (RCW 47.24). The statute provides that in those cities or towns with a population of 15,000 or less, the Department of Transportation (DOT) shall be responsible for: (1) maintaining the stability of the slopes of cuts and fills and the embankments within the right of way to protect the roadway; and (2) operation, maintenance and control of traffic signals, signs and control devices for motor vehicle traffic and pedestrians on state highways.

If a city or town has a population greater than 15,000 after January 1990, the state only retains these responsibilities

until June 30, 1993, when the responsibilities for maintenance shift to the city or town.

A second way in which the responsibilities for maintenance could be modified is if the Legislature takes action to change the current law. In 1991 a task force was created to study the maintenance responsibilities of cities and towns and to reexamine the population threshold. The task force has recommended that the population threshold be raised to 20,000.

Summary of Amended Bill: The population threshold at which cities and towns must assume additional responsibility for their streets that are part of the highway system is raised to 20,000.

Once a city or town is determined to have exceeded the threshold, the transfer of maintenance responsibilities shall take effect three years from the date of the determination. During this time, cities and towns should plan for additional staffing, budgetary and equipment requirements.

Amended Bill Compared to Substitute Bill: The population threshold is lowered from 22,500 to 20,000.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: Cities with a population of 15,000 do not have the tax base to provide adequate maintenance of city streets designated as state routes.

Testimony Against: None.

Witnesses: Senator Haugen, prime sponsor; Stan Finkelstein, Association of Washington Cities; and Dennis Ingham, Department of Transportation.