

HOUSE BILL REPORT

ESSB 6523

As Reported By House Committee On:
Transportation

Title: An act relating to transferring the responsibilities of traffic safety.

Brief Description: Transferring the responsibilities of traffic safety.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Senator Vognild).

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Transportation, February 28, 1994, DP.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 23 members: Representatives R. Fisher, Chair; Brown, Vice Chair; Jones, Vice Chair; Schmidt, Ranking Minority Member; Backlund; Brough; Brumsickle; Cothorn; Eide; Finkbeiner; Forner; Hansen; Heavey; Johanson; J. Kohl; Orr; Patterson; Quall; Romero; Sheldon; Shin; Wood and Zellinsky.

Staff: Roger Horn (786-7839).

Background: The Washington Traffic Safety Commission (WTSC) was established to assist the Governor in meeting the requirements of the Federal Highway Safety Act of 1966. There are 10 commission members including the Governor (chair), the superintendent of public instruction, the chief of the Washington State Patrol (WSP), the secretary of transportation, the director of licensing, the secretary of social and health services, the secretary of health, and one each, appointed by the Governor, from judiciary, counties and cities. The WTSC has a full-time staff of 18.

The responsibilities of the agency include coordinating traffic safety programs at the state and local level, administering federal highway safety funds for the state, promoting uniform enforcement of traffic safety laws, establishing standards for investigating and reporting traffic accidents, promoting and improving driver education, and providing educational programs to prevent alcohol-related accidents and to encourage the use of safety belts.

For FY 1994, the agency was appropriated \$3.1 million, of which 83 percent was federal revenue and 17 percent state. No operating or federal funds were appropriated to the WTSC for FY 1995.

Summary of Bill: The responsibilities of the WTSC are transferred to the office of the chief of the WSP. A 14-member traffic safety advisory committee is created consisting of the Governor as chair; the superintendent of public instruction; the director of licensing; the secretary of transportation; the chief of the WSP; the secretary of health; the secretary of social and health services; representatives appointed by the Governor from the Association of Washington Cities, the Washington State Association of Counties, and the judiciary; and four citizens appointed by the Governor representing traffic safety interests. The advisory committee must meet at least once each year and designees may attend meetings in place of the Governor, the superintendent of public instruction, and agency directors. The chief is designated as secretary of the committee and is responsible for convening meetings.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect July 1, 1994.

Testimony For: None.

Testimony Against: The WTSC has been effective in improving traffic safety and should retain its independence.

Witnesses: Steve Lind, Washington Traffic Safety Commission.