

SENATE BILL REPORT

ESSB 6523

AS PASSED SENATE, FEBRUARY 24, 1994

Brief Description: Transferring the responsibilities of traffic safety.

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

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6523 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Vognild, Chairman; Loveland, Vice Chairman; Skratek, Vice Chairman; Drew, Haugen, Morton, Prentice, M. Rasmussen, Sheldon and Winsley.

Staff: Roger Horn (786-7839)

Hearing Dates: February 4, 1994; February 8, 1994

BACKGROUND:

The Traffic Safety Commission was established as an agency in 1967 to assist the Governor in meeting the requirements of the Federal Highway Safety Act of 1966. There are ten commission members including the Governor (chair), the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Chief of the State Patrol, 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 commission has a permanent fulltime 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 commission for FY 1995.

SUMMARY:

The responsibilities of the Traffic Safety Commission are transferred to the office of the Chief of the State Patrol. 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 State Patrol; 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 of the State Patrol is designated as secretary of the committee and is responsible for convening meetings.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: available

Effective Date: July 1, 1994

TESTIMONY FOR: None

TESTIMONY AGAINST:

The Traffic Safety Commission (WSTC) has been effective in improving traffic safety. As an independent agency, WSTC brings a multidisciplinary approach to issues, is able to facilitate stakeholder consensus, and can distribute grants without an appearance of bias.

TESTIFIED: Kathy Williams, Department of Health; Ken Stark, DSHS; Maureen Westgard, DOL; Sid Morrison, DOT; Chuck Hayes (con); Herb Stumpf, WA State Substance Abuse Coalition (con); Robert Landon (con); Don Carnahan, SPI (con)