

HOUSE BILL REPORT

ESSB 6061

As Passed House:

April 18, 1997

Title: An act relating to transportation funding and appropriations.

Brief Description: Funding transportation for 1997-1999.

Sponsors: Senators Prince, Haugen and Wood; by request of Governor Locke.

Brief History:

Floor Activity: Passed House 4/18/97, 65-32.

Background: Appropriation authority is required for the expenditure of state funds. State government operates on the basis of a fiscal biennium that begins on July 1 of each odd-numbered year.

Two-thirds of the moneys appropriated in the transportation budget are for capital programs, and one-third is for operating programs of the transportation agencies.

The motor vehicle fund is the primary funding source of transportation programs, providing for 45 percent, or \$1.4 billion, of transportation appropriations in the 1995-97 transportation budget.

The 1995-97 transportation budget totaled \$3.3 billion.

Summary of Bill: Department of Transportation. No funds provided for new projects to expand highway capacity. Funding is provided for the completion of construction projects that are currently underway.

Fully funds the highway preservation program.

Provides funding for acquisition of the second passenger-only vessel and the fourth Jumbo Mark II vessel, as requested by the Transportation Commission.

Cuts several operational programs pending the results of the LTC audit of the department, including capital facilities, ferry operations, maintenance, traffic operations, and planning and research.

Provides \$42.7 million for intercity passenger rail to complete acquisition of the two Talgo trainsets, add one additional round trip between Seattle and Portland, and begin design and preliminary engineering on King Street Station.

Replaces the loss of federal rail assistance funds with the addition of \$750,000 from the High Capacity Transportation Account.

Provides \$1.0 million for the Agency Coordinating Council on Transportation to better integrate special needs services and transit services (HB 2166).

Funds the Rural Mobility Program at \$1.5 million.

Provides \$500,000 for continuation of Freight Mobility Advisory Committee (FMAC) activities.

Washington State Patrol. Provides funding for 8 new investigators to assist line troopers in vehicle license fraud, auto theft, collision investigation and felony follow-up investigation.

Adds 54 new COPS troopers during the biennium to improve the availability and response level for motorist assistance and traffic enforcement.

Upgrades the weigh scale at the SeaTac weigh station and moves the SeaTac scale to the Othello weigh station.

Completes the Microwave Migration Phase 2 (existing sites) started in the 1995-97 biennium and provides funding for maintenance of existing facilities. No new capital projects are funded.

Provides funding for the year 2000 data processing conversion.

Addresses a transfer of the funding for General Fund activities that were temporarily being funded by transportation funds during the 1993-95 and 1995-97 biennia.

Utilizes the General Fund transfer to provide pay increases to commissioned officers, commercial vehicle enforcement officers, and communication officers to bring the trooper pay levels up to the 50th percentile based on the 1997 salary survey. The pay increase is 6 percent on July 1, 1997, which includes the omnibus budget pay increase of 3 percent, and an additional 6 percent pay increase on July 1, 1998.

Department of Licensing. Funding is provided to cover the increased costs of doing business. Examples include: increase in the price of film, increased costs for plates and tabs, costs of implementing 1996 drivers under the influence of alcohol

legislation, mail and postage increases, Department of General Administration motorpool cost increases, etc.

Funding is provided for the first year of the biennium only, to finish development and operate the drivers phase of the Licensing Application Migration Project (LAMP).

Funding is provided to complete and occupy three capital facilities projects in Vancouver, Union Gap and Lacey initiated in the 95-97 biennium. Two previously authorized projects, Wenatchee and West Spokane are not funded. No new capital projects are started.

Other Agencies:

Legislative Transportation Committee: Funding is provided for TIBCRA BTRANS AID Consolidation; DOL performance audit; MVET Collection Evaluation; and, FMAC study in eastern and southeastern Washington.

Traffic Safety Commission, Board of Pilotage Commissioners, Utilities and Transportation Commission, Marine Employees Commission, Transportation Commission and Legislative Agencies, except LTC, are all funded at current level.

Transportation Improvement Board: Provides approximately \$ 222 million for projects.

County Road Administration Board: Provides approximately \$ 88 million for projects.

Special Appropriations to the Governor: Reduces the amount of estimated tort claims according to the 1996 actuarial report.

Appropriation: \$3.178 billion.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.