

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6391

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Transportation, February 10, 1998

Title: An act relating to confidentiality of certain public transportation information.

Brief Description: Protecting certain public transportation information.

Sponsors: Senators Wood, Haugen, Horn, Benton, Rasmussen, Oke, Prince, Patterson, Jacobsen, Goings, Prentice, Fraser, Morton, B. Sheldon and Bauer.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Transportation: 1/29/98, 2/10/98 [DPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6391 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Prince, Chair; Benton, Vice Chair; Goings, Haugen, Horn, Jacobsen, Morton, Oke, Patterson, Prentice, Rasmussen and Sellar.

Staff: Paul Neal (786-7315)

Background: Each state and local agency is required to make all public records available for public inspection and copying unless the record is exempt from disclosure. The Legislature has enacted a number of such exemptions, including residential addresses and phone numbers of employees or volunteers of a public agency which are held by the public agency; and the residential addresses, and phone numbers of public utility customers.

There is no express exemption provided for the names or other personally identifiable information maintained by public transit agencies regarding persons who participate in public transportation programs administered by the agency.

Summary of Substitute Bill: The names and other personally identifiable information maintained by public transit agencies regarding persons who participate in public transportation programs administered by the agency are exempt from public inspection and copying. Persons whose information is protected include: (1) vanpool, carpool or ride-share program participants; (2) transit pass purchasers; (3) users of paratransit services; (4) persons who apply for or participate in other public transportation programs administered by the transit agency.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The disclosure exemption for persons who submit complaints about public transportation services is removed.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: The bill protects people who use public transit services. For instance, information that a person had a bus pass could tip off a thief that the house was unoccupied even though a car is parked in the driveway.

Testimony Against: Concerns were raised about exempting information regarding persons who file complaints from disclosure.

Testified: PRO: Senator Wood, prime sponsor; Bob Mack, Puget Sound Transit Caucus; Steve Lindstrom, Community Transit; Steve Ross, Amalgamated Transit Union; Larry Montgomery, ATU; Becky Bogard, WA State Association of Broadcasters (pro with amendment); Roland Thompson, Allied Daily Newspapers (concerns).