

FINAL BILL REPORT

ESB 6628

PARTIAL VETO

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Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Clarifying transportation planning.

Sponsors: Senators Benton, Finkbeiner, Anderson, Zarelli and Schow.

Senate Committee on Transportation

House Committee on Transportation Policy & Budget

Background: In 1993, the Washington State Department of Transportation, in conformance with federal requirements, was required to develop a statewide multimodal transportation plan that would ensure the continued mobility of people and goods in a safe, cost-effective manner. This multimodal plan, commonly known as *Washington's Transportation Plan*, identifies transportation needs for all modes, provides financial targets for the Transportation Commission, and identifies responsibilities for its implementation. *Washington's Transportation Plan* addresses transportation modes in two broad categories: a state-owned component and a state-interest component.

The state-owned component guides state investment in state highways, including bicycles and pedestrian facilities, and state ferries. Both the state highways element and the state ferries element are structured to have maintenance, preservation, and improvement programs. These elements are required to first assess strategies to enhance the operational efficiency of the existing system before recommending system expansion.

The state-interest component defines the state's interest in aviation, marine ports and navigation, freight rail, intercity passenger rail, bicycle transportation and pedestrian walkways, and public transportation. The state-interest component is developed in conjunction with the appropriate public and private transportation providers to ensure the state's interest in these modes is being met. The state-interest component has different program structures, depending upon the needs and functions of each transportation mode.

Washington's Transportation Plan (WTP) includes long-range transportation plans and investment needs for each mode; it does not compare combinations of modal investments within a state transportation corridor. Comparison between transportation modes is difficult because of different service objectives, program structures, and funding mechanisms between the state-owned transportation component and the state-interest transportation component.

In addition, the development of the different transportation components within WTP places a primary emphasis on the improvement and integration of all transportation modes to create a seamless intermodal transportation system for people and goods. There is a concern that WTP does not specifically prioritize congestion relief, the preservation of existing investments, traveler safety, and the efficient movement of freight and goods. In addition,

there is concern that the state-owned component of WTP does not emphasize congestion relief within its capacity and operational improvement element.

As part of addressing congestion relief, the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority (RTA) is proceeding with a ten-year, high capacity transit plan approved by voters in portions of King, Pierce and Snohomish counties in November 1996. That plan calls for improvements in regional express bus service, direct access facilities to the high occupancy vehicle lane system, a commuter rail element, and a light rail transit system.

The RTA-planned system is estimated to cost \$3.9 billion in 1995 dollars. This expenditure plan assumes \$727 million in federal funds. This total expenditure includes \$1.8 billion for light rail and \$670 million for commuter rail. Train sets and other rolling stock for these rail services total \$160-\$200 million for light rail and \$120 million for commuter rail.

Federal Transit Administration regulations preclude geographic preferences for grantees' purchases, except where federal statutes expressly mandate or encourage those preferences. At present, such preferences could jeopardize federal participation in the RTA project.

Currently, two Talgo train sets are being constructed in Seattle for the state of Washington. These train sets were funded with state funds, and a condition of any contract let for such acquisition by the state was that the manufacturer of the trains has the obligation of establishing a corporate office in Washington State. The manufacturer is also obligated to spend a minimum of 25 percent of the total purchase price of the train sets on the assembly and manufacture of parts of the train sets in Washington State.-

Summary: The statewide multimodal transportation plan is directed to place a primary emphasis on congestion relief, the preservation of existing investments, the improvement of traveler safety, and the efficient movement of freight and goods.

The state-owned facilities component of the statewide multimodal transportation plan (*Washington's Transportation Plan*) is required to identify the most cost-effective combination of highway, ferry, passenger rail, and high-capacity transportation improvements that maximizes the efficient movement of people, freight, and goods within state transportation corridors.

The state-owned component, capacity and operational improvement element is directed to place a primary emphasis on congestion relief.

The intercity passenger rail plan, which is a state-interest component of the statewide multimodal plan, is required to include a service preservation element, and a service improvement element. The service preservation element must outline trackage, depots, and train investments needed to maintain and establish service levels. The service improvement element must establish service improvement objectives that outlines the trackage, depot, and train investments needed to meet improvement service objectives.

The RTA is required to consult with the Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development to explore the potential for developing contracting methods that encourage development of a manufacturing base in Washington for commuter and light rail train sets

and components. The RTA must report its findings to the Legislative Transportation Committee by January 1, 1999.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	49	0	
House	88	0	(House amended)
Senate			(Senate refused to concur)
House			(House refused to recede)
House	77	21	(House amended)
Senate	48	1	(Senate concurred)

Effective: June 11, 1998

Partial Veto Summary: The requirement for the state-owned facilities component of the statewide multimodal transportation plan to identify the most cost-effective combination of highway, ferry, passenger rail, and high capacity transportation improvements that maximize the efficient movement of people, freight, and goods within transportation corridors is removed.

The requirement for the state-owned component, capacity and operational improvement element to place a primary emphasis on congestion relief is removed.

The requirement for the intercity passenger rail plan to include a service preservation element, and a service improvement element is removed.