

FINAL BILL REPORT

SHB 1324

C 202 L 99

Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Planning for transportation safety and security.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Transportation (Originally sponsored by Representatives Fisher, K. Schmidt, Mitchell and Hankins; by request of Department of Transportation).

House Committee on Transportation
Senate Committee on Transportation

Background:

A rail fixed guideway system (RFGS) is a light, heavy or rapid rail system such as San Francisco's Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) system, a monorail, trolley, or other high capacity transportation system, except for rail systems regulated by the federal railroad administration such as Burlington Northern Railroad.

Recent federal law requires that Washington, rather than the federal government, oversee and ensure the safe operation of these systems. Federal regulations require the state to: develop safety and security program standards; monitor the implementation of the safety and security programs at the local level; require reports when hazardous conditions, accidents, or security breaches occur; conduct on-site inspections at least every three years; ensure that safety and security audits are conducted; and that annual reports are submitted by the RFGS operator.

The Department of Transportation has been designated the lead agency for purposes of implementing these federal regulations.

Summary:

The Department of Transportation (DOT) is directed to adopt administrative rules to oversee the safety and security of rail fixed guiding systems (RFGSs) in the state.

Cities, counties, public transportation benefit areas (PTBA), and regional transportation authorities (RTAs) that own or operate a RFGS must submit a system safety and security plan to DOT by September 1, 1999. Cities, counties, PTBAs, and RTAs are also required to prepare annual reports and notify DOT within 24 hours of an accident, an unacceptable hazardous condition, or security breach.

The DOT is required to conduct audits of these RFGSs once every three years. The DOT is also authorized (but not required) to perform a separate, independent investigation into any reportable accident, unacceptable hazardous condition, or security breach.

The DOT may establish timelines for implementation of safety and security programs, and may also establish sanctions for failure to submit plans on time. If the state loses any federal funds as a result of non-compliance by an owner/operator of a RFGS, the owner/operator is liable to the state for the loss of federal funds.

Votes on Final Passage:

House 96 0
Senate 44 0

Effective: May 7, 1999