

SENATE BILL REPORT

HJM 4006

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Transportation, March 31, 1999

Brief Description: Requesting the Transportation Commission to update the system of Highways of Statewide Significance.

Sponsors: Representatives Fisher, K. Schmidt, Mitchell, Radcliff, Skinner, Hankins, Wood, Cooper and Ogden.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Transportation: 3/24/99, 3/31/99 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Haugen, Chair; Goings, Vice Chair; Benton, Costa, Eide, Finkbeiner, Jacobsen, Johnson, Morton, Oke, Patterson, Sheahan and Shin.

Staff: Ashley Probart (786-7319)

Background: The 1998 Legislature passed and the Governor signed into law Substitute House Bill 1487, which was commonly known as the Level of Service (LOS) bill. One section of the LOS bill broadly identified facilities of "statewide significance," such as intercity high-speed ground transportation, the freight rail system, the interstate, and interregional state principal arterials.

Although the legislation broadly identified facilities of statewide significance, it also required the Transportation Commission to designate a state highway system of statewide significance during the interim session and then submit this list for adoption by the 1999 Legislature. The designated system is required, at a minimum, to include interstate highways and principal arterials that connect major communities across the state and support the state's economy.

The Transportation Commission is also directed to give a higher priority to correcting capacity related deficiencies on the designated system and is given the authority to set the level of service on the designated system. Level of service is an engineering formula that measures the flow of traffic on a particular facility. An LOS standard "A" means free flowing; an LOS "F" means traffic is at a standstill.

Nondesignated state highways are considered to be regionally significant state highways. Regional transportation planning organizations, in cooperation with the Department of Transportation, determine the level of service on these highways.

Maintenance, preservation, safety, and other noncapacity improvements to the entire state highway system continue to be addressed through state and federal requirements.

An oversight of the 1998 LOS bill was that it did not include legislative direction on how to address future updates to the highways of statewide significance system, including how to adopt new routes or delete routes from the designated system.

Summary of Bill: This joint memorial concurs with the Transportation Commission's designated highway system of statewide significance. The Transportation Commission is directed to conduct a review and update the system, as necessary, at least every five years. The update process may include the deletion or adoption of routes to the designated highway system of statewide significance.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: The Transportation Commission is required to present the designated system of highways of statewide significance for legislative adoption. The Joint Memorial meets this requirement and provides the Transportation Commission with directions on how to update this system.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Charlie Howard, DOT (pro).