

SENATE BILL REPORT

SSB 5153

As Passed Senate, February 26, 1999

Title: An act relating to the freight mobility strategic investment board.

Brief Description: Modifying provisions concerning the freight mobility strategic investment board.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Senators Haugen, Goings, Gardner, T. Sheldon, Rasmussen and Patterson; by request of Legislative Transportation Committee).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Transportation: 1/27/99, 2/2/99 [DPS].
Passed Senate, 2/26/99, 47-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5153 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Haugen, Chair; Gardner, Vice Chair; Goings, Vice Chair; Benton, Costa, Eide, Horn, Jacobsen, Johnson, Oke, Patterson, Prentice, Sellar, Sheahan, T. Sheldon, Shin and Swecker.

Staff: Jeff Doyle (786-7322)

Background: In 1998, the Legislature created the Freight Mobility Strategic Investment Program. The purpose of the program is to construct high-priority freight transportation projects using the greatest amount of partnership (non-state) funding possible.

The program is governed by the Freight Mobility Strategic Investment Board (FMSIB). FMSIB is comprised of freight mobility stakeholders, including the state, cities, counties, port districts, representatives of the trucking and railroad industry, barge and steamship operators, and a representative from the Governor's office.

FMSIB was directed to employ an executive director and submit a status report and staffing plan to the Legislature prior to the 1999 legislative session. It was anticipated that FMSIB would remain an autonomous board operating independently from the state Department of Transportation (DOT). Current law requires that DOT, the Transportation Improvement Board (TIB) and County Road Administration Board (CRAB) provide staff support for most of FMSIB's functions.

The authorizing legislation does not permit board members to be reimbursed travel and other necessary expenses for attending board meetings. This was done with the expectation that each member of the board, or his/her representative agency, would pay for their travel expenses.

Summary of Bill: Members of the Freight Mobility Strategic Investment Board are eligible to receive customary and reasonable travel reimbursement as allowed under Office of Financial Management guidelines.

FMSIB is no longer required to hire an executive director. If FMSIB chooses not to hire an executive director, it must contract out with DOT for that position. FMSIB may obtain additional staff support from DOT, TIB and CRAB, but only by contracting for such support.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 19, 1999.

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

Testimony For: The board needs this flexibility to continue operating with a small staff.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: Dan O'Neal, Denny Ingham, Freight Mobility Strategic Investment Board.

House Amendment(s): The board is allowed greater flexibility to contract out with other state agencies or with the private sector to provide staffing, rather than requiring the board to hire an executive director or to contract with DOT for that position. It is clarified that only travel expenses that are reasonable and customary may be reimbursed, pursuant to OFM guidelines.