

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## ESSB 5955

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As Passed Senate, March 15, 1999

**Title:** An act relating to the legislative transportation committee.

**Brief Description:** Adjusting composition and administration of the legislative transportation committee.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Senators Snyder, Haugen, McDonald, Benton and Prentice).

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Transportation: 2/25/99, 3/4/99 [DPS].  
Passed Senate, 3/15/99, 45-0.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

**Majority Report:** That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5955 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

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

**Staff:** Gene Baxstrom (786-7303)

**Background:** The Legislative Transportation Committee was first established in 1947 as the Joint Fact Finding Committee on Highways, Streets and Bridges. It consisted of 12 members: one Senator and one Representative from each of the six state Department of Highways districts. In subsequent years, the committee's name was changed, geographical representation requirements were dropped, the membership was gradually increased, and in 1959 a one-member majority for the House was established.

The Speaker of the House and the President of the Senate appoint members to the committee at the close of session in odd-numbered years.

Since 1967 membership has consisted of 12 Representatives and 11 Senators. From the beginning, appointees from each house have reflected the party split within each house.

The law is silent as to the process for selection of officers of the committee.

**Summary of Bill:** The number of Senate members on the Legislative Transportation Committee is increased from 11 to 12 (to equal the number of House members). Not more than six members from each house may be from the same political party. Vacancies must be filled from the same house and party as the original appointment.

The committee chair is elected every two years and effective January 1, 2001, the chairmanship rotates between the House and Senate. The chairman must be from the majority party and the vice-chair is to be from the opposite house and the opposite political party.

The committee is directed to form an executive committee composed of two members from each of the four major political caucuses and to include the chair and vice-chair. Alternates from each caucus are provided for and the duties of the executive committee are to include adopting interim work plans and meeting schedules, approving all contracts signed on behalf of the committee, approving policies for travel of members and staff, and setting policies for staff utilization.

A process to implement this act for the 1999 interim through the 2001 session is set forth. On the effective date of this act, the president must appoint the 12th Senate member and there must be an election of officers based on the 24-member committee. This will not affect the committee serving in the 1997-99 period.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

**Effective Date:** The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

**Testimony For:** None.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Testified:** No one.