
Transportation Committee

E2SSB 5162

Brief Description: Establishing a joint safety rest area demonstration project.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Senators Benton, Finkbeiner, Johnson, Oke, Hale, Parlette, West, Rossi and Long).

Brief Summary of Engrossed Second Substitute Bill

- The Department of Transportation is authorized to solicit proposals from private and nonprofit entities for a joint safety rest area demonstration project.

Hearing Date: 2/25/02

Staff: Penny Nerup (786-7335).

Background:

The Washington Department of Transportation (DOT) owns and operates 42 safety rest areas (SRAs). Twenty-nine SRAs are located on the interstate system, 10 on the National Highway System (NHS), and the remaining three on state routes.

Federal funds were used to build or rehabilitate the majority of the SRAs.

Approximately 77 million travelers, including drivers of commercial vehicles, visit Washington's SRAs each biennium. The biennial cost of maintaining and operating SRAs is approximately \$8 million.

Summary of Bill:

The Secretary of the DOT must solicit proposals from private and nonprofit entities for a joint SRA demonstration project.

The DOT must negotiate and enter into agreements with these entities to provide services at a specific site that does not currently have a SRA. The agreements must include the following provisions:

- 1) the SRA provider is required to give the DOT fair market value for any access rights or use of DOT property;

- 2) the service provided at the SRA must meet DOT requirements;
- 3) the volunteer refreshment program must be allowed to operate;
- 4) provision of vending machines operated by the Department of Services for the Blind must be negotiated by the proponent;
- 5) the demonstration project is exempt from state contracting-out provisions; and
- 6) the agreements have a term not to exceed 20 years.

All revenues provided to the DOT from the demonstration project must be deposited in the Motor Vehicle Fund. The DOT must provide an initial report to the Legislature by December 1, 2003, and annual reports thereafter.

The DOT must seek a waiver from the Federal Highway Administration from any federal laws that preclude private or nonprofit entities from operating SRAs. The waiver is required to be for both current and future SRAs.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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