

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5170

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Transportation, March 6, 2001
Ways & Means, March 26, 2001

Title: An act relating to commute trip reduction.

Brief Description: Creating a temporary joint task force on telework enhancement.

Sponsors: Senators Jacobsen, Finkbeiner, Eide and Kohl-Welles.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Transportation: 2/5/01, 3/6/01 [DPS, DNP].
Ways & Means: 3/8/01, 3/26/01 [DP2S].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5170 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Haugen, Chair; Gardner, Vice Chair; Eide, Finkbeiner, Jacobsen, Kastama, McAuliffe, Oke, Patterson, Prentice, Shin and Swecker.

Minority Report: Do not pass.

Signed by Senator Benton.

Staff: Jennifer Ziegler (786-7316)

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Majority Report: That Second Substitute Senate Bill No. 5170 be substituted therefor, and the second substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Brown, Chair; Constantine, Vice Chair; Fairley, Vice Chair; Fraser, Hewitt, Honeyford, Kline, Kohl-Welles, Long, Parlette, Rasmussen, Regala, Roach, Rossi, Sheahan, B. Sheldon, Snyder, Spanel, Thibaudeau, Winsley and Zarelli.

Staff: David Schumacher (786-7474)

Background: "Telework" is a work arrangement in which employees are regularly scheduled to perform the normal duties and responsibilities of their positions at locations other than the traditional workplace, through the use of computers or telecommunications. Telework can occur at an employee's home or at an alternate work site set up by the employer.

Summary of Second Substitute Bill: A telework enhancement committee is created as part of the Commute Trip Reduction Task Force. The Commute Trip Reduction Task Force must select the committee members and those members do not also have to be task force members.

The committee selects projects for grants and loans. Telework grants and loans are not limited to those counties subject to the commute trip reduction program. The task force must report to the Legislature on the effectiveness of the telework program. A telework enhancement account is created in the state treasury.

Second Substitute Bill Compared to Substitute Bill: The second substitute removed the B&O credits for telework.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: A telework enhancement committee is created in the Commute Trip Reduction Task Force. A telework enhancement account is created in the state treasury. A tax credit is created for employers for telework expenditures. A null and void clause is added.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on March 6, 2001.

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

Testimony For: Some studies indicate that telework can decrease the rush hour commute by as much as 15 percent. Purchasing a computer costs much less than buying a bus. Telework is one of the least expensive ways to provide new capacity. Many people are negotiating telework benefits as part of employment contracts. Telework can strengthen rural economies. Employers appreciate incentives to offering congestion relief programs. There are numerous advantages provided by teleworking.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Senator Jacobsen, prime sponsor; Lewis McMurrin, Washington Software Alliance; Dee Christensen, WSU Energy Program; Mike Wooden, AT&T; Joan Cullen, GA.