

SENATE BILL REPORT

ESSB 5755

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Transportation, March 4, 2002

Title: An act relating to the responsibilities of the transportation commission.

Brief Description: Adjusting responsibilities of the transportation commission.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Senators Horn, Haugen, Winsley, McAuliffe and Oke; by request of The Blue Ribbon Commission on Transportation).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Transportation: 2/12/01, 3/8/01 [DPS]; 3/2/02, 3/4/02 [DP2S, DNP].
Passed Senate: 3/23/01, 39-6.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: That Second Substitute Senate Bill No. 5755 be substituted therefor, and the second substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Haugen, Chair; Benton, Finkbeiner, Horn, Jacobsen, Kastama, Keiser, Prentice and Shin.

Minority Report: Do not pass.

Signed by Senators Gardner, Vice Chair; T. Sheldon and Swecker.

Staff: Greg Doss (786-7341)

Background: The Legislature and the Governor formed the Blue Ribbon Commission on Transportation in 1998 to assess the local, regional, and state transportation system; ensure that current and future money is spend wisely; make the system more accountable and predictable; and prepare a 20-year plan for funding and investing in the transportation system. The commission consisted of 46 members representing business, labor, agriculture, tribes, government, ports, shipping, transit, rail, environmental interests, and the general public.

The commission made 18 recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature. In Recommendation Two, the commission recommended the establishment of a single point of accountability at the state level strengthening the role of the state in ensuring accountability of the statewide transportation system.

The Legislature created the Transportation Commission in 1977 to govern the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT). The seven-member commission appoints the Secretary of Transportation, proposes transportation legislation and budgets, approves the issuance of bonds for highways, and establishes the policies of the WSDOT in coordinating transportation planning and administering grants to cities and counties. The commission has

authority to determine ferry fares, tolls, and other charges for use of the transportation system.

Summary of Second Substitute Bill: The authority to appoint the Secretary of the Department of Transportation is moved from the Transportation Commission to the Governor.

The Secretary may serve up to one year before Senate confirmation. The commission retains authority to determine ferry fares, tolls, and other charges for transportation system facilities. All other duties of the Transportation Commission are to be assumed by the Secretary of the Department of Transportation.

Second Substitute Bill Compared to Substitute Bill: The substitute bill was not considered.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on March 2, 2002.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect on January 1, 2003.

Testimony For: None.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Transportation Commissioners Kargianias and Barnes; Secretary of Transportation Douglas MacDonald.