

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5759

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Transportation, March 8, 2001

Title: An act relating to priority programming of highway improvements.

Brief Description: Improving traffic chokepoints.

Sponsors: Senators Patterson, Horn, Prentice, McAuliffe, Shin, Finkbeiner, Winsley, Haugen, Franklin, Kohl-Welles and Kastama; by request of The Blue Ribbon Commission on Transportation.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Transportation: 2/14/01, 3/8/01 [DPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5759 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Haugen, Chair; Gardner, Vice Chair; Benton, Eide, Finkbeiner, Horn, Jacobsen, Johnson, Kastama, McAuliffe, McDonald, Oke, Patterson, Prentice, T. Sheldon, Shin and Swecker.

Staff: Jennifer Ziegler (786-7316)

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 spent 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, trucking, transit, rail, environmental interests and the general public.

The commission made 18 recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature. Recommendation Five outlined several ways to invest in maintenance, preservation, and improvement of the entire transportation system so that transportation benchmarks can be achieved in. The commission recommended that the Legislature make cost-effective system expansions in heavily traveled corridors. The commission recommended looking to congestion, using a benefit-cost analysis in making investments, and using a corridor approach in transportation planning and investing.

Summary of Substitute Bill: Funding for transportation improvements should be allocated to the worst traffic chokepoints in the state. Priority programming for transportation improvements must be based on traffic congestion, location within a heavily traveled corridor, synchronization with other potential transportation projects, and benefit-cost analysis to determine the value of the proposed project.

The Transportation Commission or its successor must report the results of its priority programming to the Legislature by December 1, 2004.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The effective date is changed from July 1, 2001 to July 1, 2004.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: July 1, 2004.

Testimony For: All jurisdictions have chokepoints. A corridor approach is more effective than individual projects. This legislation helps urban and suburban areas. Citizens want to know why current funds are not spent on relieving chokepoints.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Senator Patterson, prime sponsor; Dale Steadman, BRCT; Rick Smith, WSDOT.