

---

HOUSE BILL 1685

---

State of Washington

57th Legislature

2001 Regular Session

By Representatives Fisher, Mitchell and Poulsen; by request of The Blue Ribbon Commission on Transportation

Read first time 01/31/2001. Referred to Committee on Transportation.

1 AN ACT Relating to environmental permit streamlining for  
2 transportation projects; and amending RCW 47.01.021, 47.01.290, and  
3 47.01.300.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 **Sec. 1.** RCW 47.01.021 and 1977 ex.s. c 151 s 2 are each amended to  
6 read as follows:

7 As used in this title unless the context indicates otherwise:

8 (1) "Department" means the department of transportation created in  
9 RCW 47.01.031;

10 (2) "Commission" means the transportation commission created in RCW  
11 47.01.051;

12 (3) "Secretary" means the secretary of transportation as provided  
13 for in RCW 47.01.041;

14 (4) "One-stop permitting" means a consolidated permitting process  
15 for all environmental reviews and permitting of transportation  
16 projects;

17 (5) "Low-impact development standards" means techniques,  
18 technologies, or strategies that seek to reduce the negative impact of  
19 transportation facilities, projects, and services on communities and

1 the environment, and promote more efficient and effective use of  
2 transportation facilities. Examples include transportation demand  
3 management, transportation system management, and smart growth.

4 **Sec. 2.** RCW 47.01.290 and 1994 c 258 s 3 are each amended to read  
5 as follows:

6 The legislature recognizes that environmental review of  
7 transportation projects is a continuous process that should begin at  
8 the earliest stages of planning and continue through final project  
9 construction. Early and extensive involvement of the relevant  
10 environmental regulatory authorities is critical in order to avoid  
11 significant changes in substantially completed project design and  
12 engineering. Additionally, streamlining the permit approval process is  
13 essential for reducing project delays. It is the expectation of the  
14 legislature that if a comprehensive environmental approach is  
15 integrated throughout various transportation processes, onerous,  
16 duplicative, and time-consuming permit processes will be minimized.

17 **Sec. 3.** RCW 47.01.300 and 1994 c 258 s 4 are each amended to read  
18 as follows:

19 The department shall, in cooperation with environmental regulatory  
20 authorities:

21 (1) Identify and document environmental resources in the  
22 development of the statewide multimodal plan under RCW 47.06.040;

23 (2) Allow for public comment regarding changes to the criteria used  
24 for prioritizing projects under chapter 47.05 RCW before final adoption  
25 of the changes by the commission;

26 (3) Use an environmental review as part of the project prospectus  
27 identifying potential environmental impacts, mitigation, and costs  
28 during the early project identification and selection phase, submit the  
29 prospectus to the relevant environmental regulatory authorities, and  
30 maintain a record of comments and proposed revisions received from the  
31 authorities;

32 (4) Actively work with the relevant environmental regulatory  
33 authorities during the design alternative analysis process and seek  
34 written concurrence from the authorities that they agree with the  
35 preferred design alternative selected;

36 (5) Develop a uniform methodology, in consultation with relevant  
37 environmental regulatory authorities, for submitting plans and

1 specifications detailing project elements that impact environmental  
2 resources, and proposed mitigation measures, to the relevant  
3 environmental regulatory authorities during the preliminary  
4 specifications and engineering phase of project development;

5 (6) Screen construction projects to determine which projects will  
6 require complex or multiple permits. The permitting authorities shall  
7 develop methods for initiating review of the permit applications for  
8 the projects before the final design of the projects;

9 (7) Conduct special prebid meetings for those projects that are  
10 environmentally complex; ((and))

11 (8) Review environmental considerations related to particular  
12 projects during the preconstruction meeting held with the contractor  
13 who is awarded the bid;

14 (9) Actively seek delegation of permit authority from the United  
15 States Environmental Protection Agency for section 404 of the federal  
16 Clean Water Act. This delegation of permit authority should be sought  
17 only for transportation projects under the direction of the department;

18 (10) Actively work with environmental regulatory authorities to  
19 establish standards for environmental reviews that are consistent among  
20 local, county, state, and federal governmental jurisdictions; and

21 (11) Actively work with environmental regulatory authorities to  
22 determine and document the issues, procedures, and factors central to  
23 establishing one-stop permitting for major transportation capital  
24 projects. This effort should:

25 (a) Identify highway projects of statewide significance to be  
26 eligible for one-stop permitting;

27 (b) Select a significant highway construction project as a pilot  
28 project to be completed in two years;

29 (c) Evaluate the use of planning and permitting standards that  
30 encourage low-impact alternatives; and

31 (d) Seek to accelerate the permit process for projects that use  
32 low-impact development standards.

--- END ---