
SENATE BILL 6148

State of Washington

57th Legislature

2001 Regular Session

By Senators Jacobsen, Thibaudeau, Horn, Finkbeiner, Eide, Constantine, Patterson, McDonald, Prentice and Kohl-Welles

Read first time 03/14/2001. Referred to Committee on Transportation.

1 AN ACT Relating to the Puget Sound transportation commission; and
2 adding a new chapter to Title 47 RCW.

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

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature recognizes that existing
5 transportation facilities in many regions of the state are inadequate
6 to address mobility needs. The legislature finds that a single
7 statewide board whose members are appointed by the governor and which
8 is assisted by regional advisory committees can be more effective than
9 separate local jurisdictions at planning and funding regional
10 transportation improvement. It is the policy of the state of
11 Washington to enable the creation of a statewide board and regional
12 committees to plan and fund regional transportation needs.

13 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** The definitions set forth in this section
14 apply throughout this chapter.

15 (1) "Puget Sound transportation commission" or "commission" means
16 the body established under section 3 of this act.

1 (2) "Transportation projects" or "projects" means improvements to
2 streets, highways, roads, ferries, transit, or high capacity
3 transportation.

4 (3) "Urban congestion district" or "district" means an area
5 designated by the governor that follows the established boundaries of
6 a county, school district, legislative district, or any combination of
7 those three.

8 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** (1) The Puget Sound transportation
9 commission is created.

10 (2) The commission is composed of nine members. The following
11 members are appointed by the governor for terms of four years:

12 (a) Two members appointed from a list of at least four persons
13 nominated by the association of Washington cities or its successor;

14 (b) Two members appointed from a list of at least four persons
15 nominated by the Washington state association of counties or its
16 successor;

17 (c) One member of a public transit system;

18 (d) One member representing the environmental community;

19 (e) One member representing the construction industry;

20 (f) One member representing the department of transportation;

21 (g) One member from the office of financial management.

22 (3) All members are subject to confirmation by the senate except
23 for those listed in subsection (2)(f) and (g) of this section.

24 (4) Members of the commission will be reimbursed for reasonable and
25 customary travel expenses as provided in RCW 43.03.050 and 43.03.060.

26 (5) If a vacancy on the commission occurs by death, resignation, or
27 otherwise, the governor shall fill the vacant position for the
28 unexpired term. Each vacancy in a position appointed from lists
29 provided by the associations and departments under subsection (2) of
30 this section must be filled from a list of at least four persons
31 nominated by the relevant association or associations.

32 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** The governor shall designate urban
33 congestion districts. The boundary lines of these districts must meet
34 the criteria established in this chapter.

35 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** (1) The commission, with the advice of the
36 corridor advisory boards, shall designate transportation projects,

1 exclusive of maintenance and preservation, that will be funded under
2 this chapter.

3 (2) The commission shall use the benchmarks set forth in section 9
4 of this act as a guideline when selecting transportation projects.

5 (3) Once the commission has chosen a project or projects, it shall
6 develop a funding and financing package to pay for the projects
7 selected.

8 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** (1) The commission shall create a corridor
9 advisory board for each urban congestion district designated by the
10 governor.

11 (2) The board shall provide policy advice to the commission in
12 selecting the project or projects to be funded and the different
13 revenue options.

14 (3) The board shall allow representatives of major employers within
15 the region, the department, transit districts, port districts, and
16 representatives of cities, towns, and counties within the affected
17 corridor to participate in policymaking.

18 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 7.** (1) The commission may impose, within an
19 urban congestion district, the following voter-approved local option
20 funding sources:

21 (a) An excise tax of up to two dollars per month per employee on
22 all employees located within the district, measured by the number of
23 full-time equivalent employees. This tax may not be imposed within a
24 county that is already imposing an excise tax under RCW 81.100.030 or
25 within the jurisdiction that is already imposing an employee tax under
26 RCW 81.104.150;

27 (b) A local option vehicle license fee of up to seventy-five
28 dollars per vehicle;

29 (c) Tolls on road improvements;

30 (d) A local option motor vehicle fuel tax of up to six cents per
31 gallon; and

32 (e) A local option commercial vehicle charge of up to one hundred
33 fifty dollars per commercial vehicle.

34 (2) No taxes may be imposed without a vote of the people within the
35 boundaries of the district on a referendum as set forth in section 8 of
36 this act.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 8.** The commission must submit, as a referendum
2 to a vote of the people, the projects it has selected and any funding
3 package that requires the imposition of additional taxes in the
4 district. The referendum must specify that the additional tax will be
5 dedicated to funding the specific improvement projects chosen by the
6 commission. Upon a majority vote of the people in favor of the project
7 list and the increased taxes, the commission shall not change the
8 boundaries of the district, project list, or taxes imposed or collected
9 except by a majority vote of the people in the affected urban
10 congestion district. A commission may not undertake construction or
11 work associated with an improvement project, other than that work
12 necessary to prepare the referendum, without approval of the referendum
13 by a majority vote of the people.

14 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 9.** The commission shall use as a guide the
15 following benchmarks when choosing projects by selecting projects that
16 move towards the following benchmarks:

17 (1) Traffic congestion on urban interstate highways does not exceed
18 the national mean for interstate highways;

19 (2) Driver delay in metropolitan areas does not exceed the national
20 mean for metropolitan areas;

21 (3) The number of traffic accidents on systems throughout the state
22 continues to decline;

23 (4) Air quality is maintained at federally required levels;

24 (5) Freight mobility is accommodated within the transportation
25 system; and

26 (6) Overall hours of travel delay per person in congested corridors
27 are reduced to and maintained at reasonable levels.

28 These benchmarks represent only minimum standards.

29 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 10.** The department shall create a division of
30 dedicated staff and services whose sole responsibility is to coordinate
31 the design, preliminary engineering, permit, financing, and
32 construction of projects selected by the commission.

33 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 11.** The Puget Sound transportation commission
34 matching account is created within the motor vehicle fund. The state
35 treasurer shall administer the account, and invest all moneys deposited
36 in it. Funds within the matching account must be used solely to match

1 up to sixty-five percent of the total costs of a project or projects
2 selected by the commission.

3 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 12.** A project or series of projects selected by
4 the commission, and that has sought and obtained voter approval of the
5 project or series of projects, as well as a source of revenue from
6 which to fund all or a portion of the project or series of projects, is
7 eligible for matching funds from the Puget Sound transportation
8 commission matching account of up to sixty-five percent of the total
9 costs of the project or series of projects selected.

10 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 13.** The department is responsible for projects
11 selected by the commission, the funding for which has been approved by
12 the voters.

13 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 14.** Sections 1 through 13 of this act
14 constitute a new chapter in Title 47 RCW.

--- END ---