

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 5248

As Reported by House Committee On:
Transportation

Title: An act relating to transportation.

Brief Description: Achieving transportation workforce efficiencies.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Highways & Transportation (originally sponsored by Senators Horn, Haugen, Prentice, Oke and Stevens).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Transportation: 3/20/03, 3/24/03 [DPA].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill
(As Amended by House Committee)

- Establishes provisions aimed at increasing efficiencies for highway project delivery, apprenticeship training and prevailing wage administration, and local entity transportation planning and reporting.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass as amended. Signed by 17 members: Representatives Murray, Chair; Rockefeller, Vice Chair; Simpson, Vice Chair; Jarrett, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Campbell, Clibborn, Cooper, Dickerson, Flannigan, Hankins, Hatfield, Hudgins, Lovick, Romero, Shabro, Sullivan and Wood.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 8 members: Representatives Ericksen, Ranking Minority Member; Anderson, Armstrong, Bailey, Kristiansen, Nixon, Schindler and Woods.

Staff: Reema Griffith (786-7301).

Background:

In 1998 the Legislature and the Governor formed the Blue Ribbon Commission on Transportation (BRCT) to: Assess the local, regional, and state transportation system;

ensure that current and future funding 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 BRCT made 18 recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature. Specific recommendations included: Adopting transportation benchmarks; achieving construction and project delivery efficiencies; and using the private sector to deliver projects and transportation services.

The 2002 Legislature passed into law ESHB 2304, the Omnibus Transportation Efficiency Act that addressed and implemented several of the BRCT recommendations. The implementation of three sections of the bill relating to highway project delivery efficiencies, apprenticeship training and prevailing wage administration, and local entity transportation planning and reporting were contingent on the passage of Referendum 51 but with its failure, those sections became null and void.

Summary of Amended Bill:

SSB 5248 contains the sections of ESHB 2304 that became null and void with the failure of Referendum 51.

Part I: Alternative Delivery Procedures for Construction Services:

The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) is required to develop a financial incentive program to aid in the retention and recruitment of employees.

The WSDOT is authorized to acquire construction and engineering services from private firms in order to deliver the highway construction program, but solely to augment the WSDOT's current workforce. No state employee may lose their job as a result of implementing new and innovative project delivery procedures.

Part II: Apprenticeship and Adjustments to Prevailing Wage Provisions:

The Department of Labor and Industries (L&I) is required to implement a number of process improvements to their prevailing wage program, such as processing intents and affidavits within seven working days; implementing electronic processing of intents and affidavits; promoting the effective use of technology to improve the services provided by the prevailing wage program; etc.

The Apprenticeship Council (Council) is required to work with the WSDOT, local transportation jurisdictions, representatives of labor and business organizations with interest and expertise in the transportation workforce, and representatives of the state's universities and vocational colleges to establish technical apprenticeship opportunities specific to the needs of transportation. The Council must issue a report of findings and recommendations to the Transportation Committees by December 1, 2003.

The WSDOT must work with local transportation jurisdictions and representatives of transportation labor groups to establish a human resources skills bank of transportation professionals. The skills bank must be designed to allow all transportation authorities to draw from when needed. The WSDOT must issue a report of findings and recommendations to the Transportation Committees by December 1, 2003.

The L&I, in cooperation with the WSDOT, must conduct an assessment of the current practices, including survey techniques, used in setting prevailing wages for those trades related to transportation facilities and project delivery. The assessment must include an analysis of regional variations and stratified random sampling survey methods. A final report must be submitted to the Governor and the Transportation and Labor Committees by July 1, 2003.

In establishing the prevailing rate of wage, all data collected by L&I must be used only in the county in which the work was performed.

\$100,000 is appropriated from the Public Works Administration Account to the L&I for the 2003-05 biennium to carry out the requirements of the bill.

Part III: Transportation Planning and Efficiency:

As a condition of receiving state funding, cities, counties, Public Transportation Benefit Areas, and Regional Transit Authorities are required to submit to the Transportation Commission, or its successor entity, maintenance and preservation management plans for all of their transportation system assets.

During the 2003-05 biennium, cities are required to submit to the Transportation Commission, or its successor entity, preservation rating information on at least 70 percent of their total city arterial network. Thereafter, the requirement to submit preservation rating information will increase in 5 percent increments each biennium until 100 percent of all city arterial networks have preservation rating information completed for them.

The County Road Administration Board (CRAB), or its successor entity, must establish a standard of good practice for the maintenance of transportation system assets, and counties must implement the standard by December 31, 2007.

The CRAB must develop a model maintenance management system for use by counties. Counties must annually submit their maintenance plans to the CRAB who will compile the maintenance management data and submit it annually to the Transportation Commission, or its successor entity.

Amended Bill Compared to Substitute Bill:

A null and void clause is added to the striking amendment that would take effect should there be no new transportation revenues enacted by January 1, 2004.

Appropriation: \$100,000 from the Public Works Administration Account, to the L&I.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date of Amended Bill: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed. However, the bill is null and void if there are no new transportation revenues enacted by January 1, 2004.

Testimony For: (With concerns) This legislation is understandable so long as it is tied to increased highway construction. Absent that, the bill makes the current workforce at WSDOT vulnerable to potential contracting out endeavors that are not necessary under today's funding reality.

The funding provided for L&I in the bill is not nearly enough to support the increased mandates included in the bill.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: (With concerns) Roger Boatwright, Washington State Building Trades; Don Briscoe, Professional Technical Engineers; Larry Archer, Operating Engineers; and Rick Slunaker, Associated General Contractors.