
Transportation Committee

HB 2476

Brief Description: Facilitating vehicle toll collection.

Sponsors: Representative Murray; by request of Department of Transportation.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Allows electronic toll collection on the Tacoma Narrows Bridge.
- Allows the Department of Licensing to provide vehicle ownership information to a toll facility operator in order to identify toll evaders.

Hearing Date: 1/26/04

Staff: Page Scott (786-7301).

Background:

The Department of Transportation (DOT) plans to operate the Tacoma Narrows Bridge utilizing electronic toll collection technology as well as manual toll collection. Using that technology, frequent users of the bridge can keep a transponder in their car that records their use of the toll facility. Electronic toll collection by transponder can either be prepaid or users can receive a monthly toll bill in the mail. The Transportation Commission will be addressing payment specifics as part of setting tolls.

Use of an electronic toll collection system allows traffic to move more freely than a conventional toll booth and can also be used to facilitate enforcement against toll violators. Current law does not contemplate the ability to pay tolls without stopping at a toll booth located at the facility.

The Department of Licensing (DOL) is currently authorized to provide lists of registered and legal owners of vehicles to specified entities for specified purposes. For example, car manufacturers are authorized to obtain lists to assist with factory recalls. A toll facility operator is not authorized to access the DOL vehicle records to identify toll evaders.

Summary of Bill:

- Allows electronic toll collection on the Tacoma Narrows Bridge.
- Defines "electronic toll collection" and "photo monitoring systems" under RCW 47.46 (Public-Private Transportation Initiatives)

- Directs the DOT to create rules for operating and managing toll collection and allow for transponder compatibility between statewide toll facilities (including ferries, public transit agencies).
- Adds toll facility operator to the list of entities that DOL may furnish lists of registered and legal owners in order to identify toll violators.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.