

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5527

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Highways & Transportation, February 25, 2003

Title: An act relating to the creation of the local transportation grant board.

Brief Description: Creating the local transportation grant board.

Sponsors: Senators Horn and Haugen; by request of Governor Locke.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Highways & Transportation: 1/30/03, 2/25/03 [DPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5527 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Horn, Chair; Swecker, Vice Chair; Esser, Finkbeiner, Haugen, Jacobsen; Kastama, Oke and Prentice.

Staff: Greg Doss (786-7341)

Background: The County Road Administration Board (CRAB) reviews county compliance with standards of good practice, statutes and administrative rules. In the current biennium, CRAB administers an \$86 million capital program that funds grants and distributions to county governments. CRAB provides assistance to counties in the areas of professional engineering, program development and road management. In the current biennium, the Transportation Improvement Board (TIB) administers a \$236 million capital program that funds grants primarily targeted to urban county and city governments. TIB administers the Route Jurisdiction Transfer Program and selects projects for the federal Surface Transportation Program “ Statewide Competitive Projects Program. The Freight Mobility Strategic Investment Board (FMSIB) is responsible for selecting, prioritizing and creating funding partnerships for freight transportation projects. In the current biennium, \$39 million in Motor Vehicle Fund-State funding is reappropriated to the Department of Transportation for FMSIB identified projects.

Summary of Substitute Bill: The Local Boards Coordinating Committee (LBCC) is created. Effective immediately upon passage, the LBCC is composed of the Washington State Department of Transportation Secretary, or his appointee, and the executive leadership of the CRAB and TIB. The LBCC employs an executive director and staff for all existing and statutorily required programs of the CRAB and TIB, EXCEPT, the first executive director is appointed by the Governor with approval of the Senate prior to July 1, 2003.

Staff employed by the LBCC are part of the Local Boards Coordinated Program (LBCP). The LBCP receives a legislative appropriation to carry out its duties. Funds from dedicated

CRAB or TIB accounts must be used by the LBCP only for the programs they currently support.

Effective July 1, 2003, the TIB and CRAB statutes authorizing separate retention of an executive director and staff are repealed. All staff and assets of the CRAB and TIB are transferred to the custody of the LBCP. The Transportation Improvement Board is reduced by four positions.

No later than December 31, 2003 the Coordinated Program Executive Director must report to the Legislature on recommendations for staff co-location, systems integration, staff reorganization, and the possible elimination of programs or services.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The original bill was not considered.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 28, 2003.

Effective Date: Section 3 takes effect immediately. Other bill provisions take effect on July 1, 2003.

Testimony For: The current fiscal climate creates an increased need for agencies to operate more efficiently. The new Local Transportation Grant Board will retain current local grant programs, create staff efficiencies and provide a one-stop approach to local capital funding.

Testimony Against: The local boards are operating efficiently. Consolidation will put local grant programs and technical services at risk. The CRAB standards of good practice prevent road fund abuse. FMSIB's distinctive role leverages non-state funding and highlights Washington's emphasis on trade. Transition issues will result in an untrained staff and increased costs for equipment and office space. The LTGB does not have labor, steamship, non-motorized or transit representation.

Testified: Andrew Johnson, Office of Financial Management; Steve Gorcester, Rob McKenna Transportation Improvement Board; Jay Weber, Scott Merriman, County Road Administration Board and Association of Washington Counties; Pat Jones, Pati Otley, Don Lemmons, Freight Mobility Strategic Investment Board, Ports Association, BNSF, Washington Trucking; Larry Archer, Operating Engineers, Local 612; Mary Jo Cady, Dave O'Connell, CTA-NW; Randy Ray, Steamship Operators; Jackie White, Association of Washington Cities.