

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6697

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Highways & Transportation, February 5, 2004

Title: An act relating to allocation of federal transportation enhancement funds.

Brief Description: Allocating federal transportation enhancement funds.

Sponsors: Senators Haugen, Horn, Jacobsen, Swecker, Esser, Spanel, McAuliffe, B. Sheldon, Shin and Rasmussen.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Highways & Transportation: 2/3/04, 2/5/04 [DPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6697 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Horn, Chair; Benton, Vice Chair; Swecker, Vice Chair; Esser, Haugen, Jacobsen, Kastama, Mulliken, Murray, Oke, Poulsen and Spanel.

Staff: Greg Doss (786-7341)

Background: Every six years, the federal government authorizes a Surface Transportation Act that provides programmatic funding and direct distributions to the states. In 1998, the Federal Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) provided Washington State with a six year total of \$71 million in enhancement funds. Enhancement funds address nontraditional investments such as bicycle and pedestrian facilities, scenic and historic highway programs and rehabilitation and operation of historic transportation facilities.

Since 1991, a statewide steering committee of state and local stakeholders has determined the distribution of enhancement funds. In the last six years, the Transportation Improvement Board distributed enhancement funds according to the direction of the steering committee and local representatives.

Summary of Substitute Bill: The bill assumes that Congress will soon pass a new surface transportation act that includes enhancement funds. A statewide steering committee that has the same membership as the 1991 steering committee is established, except that the State Historic Preservation Officer is added to the committee.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The original bill would have required that at least 31 percent of enhancement funds be spent on scenic and historic highway programs. Of the amount spent on scenic and historic highway programs, at least 30 percent would have had to be spent on projects with a specific heritage element as identified by the State Historic Preservation Officer. A historic preservation element would have been added to the components identified in Regional Transportation Plans.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

Testimony For: The Governor is supportive of the committee process, but would probably not support a minimum allocation to the heritage community. The Governor would support adding to the committee the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO). The SHPO would make sure that the historic preservation community has a voice in the next distribution of enhancement funds.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Andrew Johnsen, Governors Office; Allysen Brooks, State Historic Preservation Officer.