

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SHB 1969

As Passed House:

March 10, 2005

Title: An act relating to modifying goals for the planning, operation, and performance of and investment in the state transportation system.

Brief Description: Revising transportation goals.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Representatives Ericks, Hankins, Simpson, Jarrett, Upthegrove, Murray and Dickerson).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Transportation: 2/22/05, 3/5/05 [DPS].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 3/10/05, 95-0.

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Changes the priority goals for the state's transportation system to include standards regarding maintaining, managing, and investing in the system. The Legislature's intent is expanded to include an expectation that the budget submitted for the Department of Transportation will identify performance levels funded by the budget.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 23 members: Representatives Murray, Chair; Wallace, Vice Chair; Woods, Ranking Minority Member; Skinner, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Appleton, Buck, Campbell, Dickerson, Hankins, Hudgins, Jarrett, Kilmer, Lovick, Morris, Nixon, Rodne, Sells, Shabro, Simpson, B. Sullivan, Takko, Upthegrove and Wood.

Minority Report: Without recommendation. Signed by 2 members: Representatives Curtis and Ericksen.

Staff: Beth Redfield (786-7347).

Background:

The 2002 Legislature adopted certain recommendations of the state Blue Ribbon Commission on Transportation. Responding to a recommendation to adopt transportation benchmarks, the

Legislature stated its intent that policy goals must be created for the operation of, performance of, and investment in the state's transportation system.

The policy goals are to be used as the basis for establishing detailed performance measures to be created by the Transportation Commission.

Specific goals include the following:

- no interstate highways, state routes, or local arterials shall be in poor condition;
- no bridges shall be structurally deficient, and safety retrofits must be performed on those state bridges at the highest seismic risk levels;
- traffic congestion on urban state highways shall be significantly reduced and be no worse than the national mean;
- delay per driver shall be significantly reduced and no worse than the national mean;
- per capita vehicle miles traveled shall be maintained at 2,000 levels;
- the non-auto share of commuter trips shall be increased in urban areas;
- administrative costs as a percentage of transportation spending shall achieve the most efficient quartile nationally; and
- the state's public transit agencies shall achieve the median cost-per-vehicle revenue hour of peer transit agencies, adjusting for the regional cost-of-living.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

The priority goals for public investments in transportation are replaced. The goals include:

- **Maintaining the existing system:** The state's transportation system, including interstate highways, state routes, bridges, and local arterials shall be maintained and preserved at an optimal percentage life cycle rating.
- **Managing the existing system:** The performance of the state's transportation system shall be measured, and transportation agencies will manage to achieve levels of service that improve system performance over time for all transportation users.
- **Investing in the system:** Capacity investment decisions relating to the state's transportation system shall optimize performance for multiple modes of use and be based on differential performance standards for off-peak and peak hours.

The Legislature's intent is expanded to include an expectation that the budget submitted for the Department of Transportation will identify performance levels funded by the budget.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: The bill changes the way we look at transportation issues for planning purposes. For a legislative district which includes highways 405, 522, 524, and SR 9, valuing the movement of people and freight is a very important part of the equation. It makes a great deal of sense to add the policy goals for planning. Mobility should be the test of any good transportation system. The higher priority placed on freight mobility will make a big difference for jobs and economic development. Current law only measures delay for drivers, but buses, carpools, and vanpools have more than one person, and they should be counted in a more appropriate fashion. Both climate change emissions and toxics polluting our air would significantly improve with a focus on moving all people and goods and reducing vehicle miles traveled.

Testimony Against: None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Ericks, prime sponsor; Jim Shipman, Washington State Transit Association; Donna Ewing, League of Women Voters of Washington; and Rob Johnson, Transportation Choices Coalition.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.