

**HB 2871-S.E - DIGEST**

(DIGEST AS ENACTED)

Finds that effective transportation planning in urbanized regions requires stronger and clearer lines of responsibility and accountability.

Finds that integrated, multimodal transportation planning will help reduce transportation congestion and improve safety, and that streamlined decision making will help reduce political congestion.

Finds that coordinated planning of, investment in, and operation of transportation systems will have significant benefit to the citizens of Washington, and that it is the will of the people to fund regional transportation solutions, including improving transit service in urbanized areas and among existing, fragmented transit agencies in the region. Although equity considerations must be respected, transportation problems are broader and deeper than the sum of geographic subareas.

Declares that it is therefore the policy of the state of Washington to create a regional transportation commission to develop a proposal for a regional transportation governing entity more directly accountable to the public, and to develop a comprehensive regional transportation finance plan for the citizens of the Puget Sound metropolitan region.

Declares that the commission has the following duties:

- (1) Evaluate transportation governance in the central Puget Sound area within the jurisdiction of the Puget Sound regional council. The commission shall assess and develop recommendations for what steps should be taken to: (a) Consolidate governance among agencies, including changes in institutional powers, structures, and relationships and governance needed to improve accountability for transportation decisions, while enhancing the regional focus for transportation decisions and maintaining equity among citizens in the region; (b) improve coordination in the planning of transportation investments and services; (c) improve investment strategies; (d) coordinate transportation planning and investments with adopted land use policies within the region; (e) enhance efficiency and coordination in the delivery of services provided; (f) adjust boundaries for agencies or functions within the region to address existing and future transportation and land use issues; and (g) improve coordination between regional investments and federal funds, and state funding, including those administered by the transportation improvement board, the county road administration board, and the freight mobility strategic investment board;

(2) Develop a regional transportation governance proposal that includes, at a minimum, the formation of a regional transportation governing entity, of which all or a majority of its members must be directly elected, the revenue sources that will be available to such entity, and the scope of planning authority of such entity;

(3) Publicize the commission's proposal referenced in this act by November 15, 2006, and provide at least fifteen days for public comment;

(4) Adopt the proposal referenced in this act and submit it to the legislature by January 1, 2007;

(5) Develop a comprehensive, integrated transportation finance plan for the metropolitan Puget Sound region to be submitted to the affected voters by the regional transportation governing entity;

(6) Conduct public meetings to assure active public participation in the development of the proposal referenced in this act and the regional transportation finance plan referenced in this act.

Provides that, prior to a regional transportation public vote, the department of transportation must complete all of the following requirements for both the Alaskan Way viaduct and Seattle Seawall replacement project, and the state route number 520 bridge replacement and HOV project: (1) In accordance with the national environmental policy act, the department must designate the preferred alternative, prepare a substantial project mitigation plan, and complete a comprehensive cost estimate review using the department's cost estimate validation process, for each project;

(2) In accordance with all applicable federal highway administration planning and project management requirements, the department must prepare a project finance plan for each project that clearly identifies secured and anticipated fund sources, cash flow timing requirements, and project staging and phasing plans if applicable; and

(3) The department must report these results for each project to the joint transportation committee.