

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2041

As Reported by House Committee On: Transportation

Title: An act relating to clarifying goals, objectives, and responsibilities of certain transportation agencies.

Brief Description: Clarifying goals, objectives, and responsibilities of certain transportation agencies.

Sponsors: Representatives Jarrett, Simpson, Curtis, Clibborn, Campbell, Armstrong, Ormsby, Schindler, Wallace, P. Sullivan, Ericksen and Linville.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Transportation: 2/22/07, 3/1/07 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Streamlines existing policy goals, and establishes five overarching policy goals for the planning, operation, performance of, and investment in, the state's transportation system.
- Declares the Legislature's intent that the Office of Financial Management establish objectives and performance measures for all agencies with transportation-related responsibilities, for the purpose of ensuring that transportation system performance attains the newly-established policy goals.
- Requires that the Office of Financial Management submit a baseline performance report on attainment of the newly-established policy goals by December 1, 2007, and submit its first annual attainment report to the Legislature and the Governor by October 1, 2008.
- Requires the Department of Transportation to perform certain duties to support attainment of the newly-established policy goals.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 20 members: Representatives Clibborn, Chair; Flannigan, Vice Chair; Jarrett, Ranking Minority Member; Appleton, Campbell, Dickerson, Eddy, Hankins, Hudgins, Lovick, Rodne, Rolfes, Sells, Simpson, Springer, B. Sullivan, Takko, Upthegrove, Wallace and Wood.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 6 members: Representatives Schindler, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Armstrong, Curtis, Ericksen, Hailey and Kristiansen.

Staff: Kathryn Leathers (786-7114).

Background:

Over the years, the Legislature has adopted numerous goals, objectives, and benchmarks applicable to the state's transportation system. Responding to a recommendation made by the Blue Ribbon Commission on Transportation to adopt transportation benchmarks, the 2002 Legislature stated its intent that policy goals must be created for the operation, performance of, and investment in the state's transportation system.

In 2005, the Legislature directed the Transportation Performance Audit Board (TPAB) to, among other things, study and make recommendations for modifying existing transportation goals and benchmarks, and to review the comprehensive 10-year investment program process and the corresponding statutory investment criteria. The resulting study made several recommendations, including the recommendations that existing statutes, benchmarks, and other investment criteria be replaced by new legislation that establishes and aligns overarching goals for the state transportation system, and that the adopted goals should be those goals capable of being measured consistently from year to year.

During the 2006 interim, the Joint Transportation Committee continued the work begun by the TPAB, by commissioning a report to make specific recommendations for aligning benchmarks and goals, and adjusting reporting requirements. This recently completed report recommends revising and streamlining various existing state transportation system goals, objectives, and responsibilities, and the process by which these elements are measured and reported on.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

Existing transportation objectives, benchmarks, and policy goals are streamlined, and five overarching policy goals for the planning, operation, performance of, and investment in, the state's transportation system are established:

- *Preservation:* To maintain, preserve, and extend the life and utility of prior investments in transportation systems and services.
- *Safety:* To provide for and improve the safety and security of transportation customers and the transportation system.

- *Mobility*: To improve the predictable movement of goods and people throughout Washington.
- *Environment*: To enhance Washington's quality of life through transportation investments that promote energy conservation, enhance healthy communities, and protect the environment.
- *Stewardship*: To continuously improve the quality, effectiveness, and efficiency of the transportation system.

The revised policy goals are intended to be the basis for establishing detailed and measurable objectives and related performance measures.

The Office of Financial Management (OFM) is directed to establish objectives and performance measures for all agencies with transportation-related responsibilities. The OFM must submit a baseline performance report on attainment of the new policy goals to the Legislature, for its review, and to the Transportation Commission (Commission) by December 1, 2007. The OFM's first annual attainment report is due to the Legislature by October 1, 2008.

The responsibility for proposing a comprehensive 10-year investment plan is transferred from the Commission to the OFM.

The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) is directed to perform certain duties to support attainment of the newly established policy goals. Those new duties include: (1) maintaining an inventory of the condition of structures and corridors, as well as a list of structures and corridors in most urgent need of retrofit or rehabilitation; (2) developing long-term financing plans that sustainably support ongoing maintenance and preservation of the transportation infrastructure; (3) balancing system safety and convenience to accommodate all users of the system, to safely, reliably, and efficiently provide mobility to people and goods; (4) for each project requiring an environmental impact statement, assessing life-cycle carbon emissions and alternative approaches for reducing carbon emissions; and (5) selecting engineers and architects to design environmentally sustainable, context sensitive transportation systems.

The various duties of transportation agencies are revised to ensure they are performed consistent with the new policy goals, objectives, and performance measures. It is clarified that improvements to highways of statewide significance are essential public facilities.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

Of the five newly-established transportation policy goals, the stewardship goal is modified from the goal of being effective managers of the transportation system to the goal of continuously improving the quality, effectiveness, and efficiency of the transportation system. The requirement that the powers, duties, and functions of the WSDOT be performed in a manner consistent with the new policy goals is modified to apply to all state transportation agencies, and not just the WSDOT.

The duty to establish objectives and performance measures, and to submit them to the Legislature for review, is shifted from the Governor to the OFM. The OFM is also required to submit the objectives and performance measures it establishes to the Commission for the purpose of providing input into the statewide transportation plan.

The Commission's duty to submit an attainment report on progress made by transportation agencies towards the newly established goals is transferred to the OFM. The reporting date for the baseline attainment report is changed to December 1, 2007, instead of October 1, 2007.

The Commission's duty to submit the comprehensive statewide plan to the Legislature is modified, from an even-numbered year to an odd-numbered year, and further modified from every two years to no more frequently than every four years.

Some stricken language is retained, and other technical changes are made.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) This bill is a holistic approach, and addresses significant gaps in the WSDOT's mission as it evaluates and goes forward with mega projects. The WSDOT does not do a good job of working with communities and applying principles of context sensitive design, nor do they do a good job of designing projects.

Improvements could be made to the bill as it relates to design of mega projects. A good model is the General Services Administration's design excellence program. Design should be brought to the forefront of these projects. The goal of quality design should be added to the newly-established policy goals.

The reporting period for the transportation statewide plan should be changed from every two to every four years.

Revision of the state's transportation goals is long overdue. These principles could bring a lot of pieces of our transportation system together. The bill should add duties for the WSDOT that would allow it to carry out these principles, including duties related to addressing carbon emissions and global warming.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Jarrett, prime sponsor; Stan Bowman, American Institute of Architects; Reema Griffin, Washington State Transportation Commission; Genesee

Adkins, Transportation Choices Coalition; Bill LaBorde, Washington Public Interest Research Group; and Craig Engelking, Sierra Club.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.