
HOUSE BILL 2101

State of Washington 60th Legislature 2007 Regular Session

By Representatives Jarrett and Eddy

Read first time 02/08/2007. Referred to Committee on Transportation.

1 AN ACT Relating to regional transportation governance; creating new
2 sections; providing an expiration date; and declaring an emergency.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) Chapter 311, Laws of 2006 established
5 the regional transportation commission to evaluate transportation
6 governance in the central Puget Sound area within the jurisdiction of
7 the Puget Sound regional council and develop options for a new regional
8 transportation governance proposal.

9 (2) The commission's report to the legislature found that:

10 (a) The Puget Sound region is experiencing a severe strain on its
11 transportation system;

12 (b) The strain on the Puget Sound region is manifested through
13 several important indicators, especially congestion. Continued
14 population and transportation demand growth in the region, combined
15 with a thirty-year history of underfunding transportation in the
16 region, has created a need and an opportunity to prevent a potential
17 regional transportation crisis;

18 (c) A unified regional transportation governance system would

1 contribute significantly to the prevention of a potential regional
2 transportation crisis;

3 (d) Even if all presently identifiable revenue sources are tapped,
4 there will be inadequate resources available to meet all of the
5 identified needs in the destination 2030 plan;

6 (e) The Puget Sound region needs to consider how to gain maximum
7 efficiencies from all possible resources in order to provide future
8 mobility, finance new capacity, and manage all transportation capacity
9 as effectively as possible;

10 (f) There is no single governmental entity responsible for
11 prioritizing projects regionally across geography and modes;

12 (g) Our transit systems, initially developed to provide local
13 service, now play a large role in regional transportation networks; and

14 (h) The policy of subregional equity introduces a sense of
15 fairness, but can produce results inconsistent with prioritizing
16 regionally.

17 (3) Based upon these findings, the regional transportation
18 commission recommended that:

19 (a) The state legislature create a fifteen-member Puget Sound
20 regional transportation commission, with nine elected and six appointed
21 members, that has the authority and responsibility for planning,
22 prioritizing, and funding all modes of regional transportation for the
23 four-county area;

24 (b) The Puget Sound regional transportation commission should be
25 responsible for land use and transportation planning, prioritizing, and
26 funding;

27 (c) The Puget Sound regional transportation commission should have
28 the authority to generate revenue from tax and transportation user
29 charges to pay for future transportation projects;

30 (d) The Puget Sound regional transportation commission should have
31 the authority to implement regional demand management tools as a way of
32 reducing demand and increasing revenue;

33 (e) The Puget Sound regional transportation commission should be
34 responsible for all state roads within the region, including roads of
35 statewide significance and roads of regional significance;

36 (f) The Puget Sound regional transportation commission should have
37 authority over planning, prioritizing, and financing regional transit

1 projects, including authority over sound transit and authority to
2 standardize fares for regional routes, including those provided by
3 local transit agencies;

4 (g) The boundary of the Puget Sound regional transportation
5 commission should include all of King, Snohomish, Pierce, and Kitsap
6 counties, which is the optimum boundary for all modes of transportation
7 requiring current and future planning;

8 (h) The Puget Sound regional transportation commission should not
9 be required to spend money evenly by mode or across geographical areas,
10 and thus, should not be required to operate on the basis of strict
11 subarea or modal equity;

12 (i) The Puget Sound regional transportation commission should have
13 broad authority to finance and operate transportation facilities.

14 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1) The legislature finds that the current
15 system of regional transportation governance is inadequate to meet
16 regional and state transportation needs in the twenty-first century and
17 needs fundamental systemic change. A single authority for planning,
18 prioritizing, and funding all modes of transportation would be able to
19 choose the optimal solutions to the region's transportation challenges,
20 rather than seek problems to solve with predetermined solutions.
21 Furthermore, the Puget Sound region could speak with a single unified
22 voice about its transportation needs and more effectively work with its
23 funding partners to address regional priorities.

24 (2) The legislature intends to form, effective January 1, 2009, a
25 new entity as recommended by the regional transportation commission.

26 (3) The joint transportation committee shall convene a regional
27 governance task force, composed of legislative members chosen by the
28 cochairs of the committee. The task force must also include a
29 representative of the governor. The cochairs of the joint
30 transportation committee, or their designees, shall be the cochairs of
31 the regional governance task force.

32 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** (1) The regional governance task force of
33 the joint transportation committee shall:

34 (a) Consider the impacts of the new governance structure on other
35 aspects of state and local law and affected organizations and programs;
36 and

1 (b) Develop a statutory framework and draft legislation for
2 implementing the recommendations of the commission.

3 (2) The task force may establish legal and technical work groups to
4 conduct its work. In developing an implementing framework and proposed
5 legislation, the committee must analyze and review at least the
6 following issues:

7 (a) The impact of integrating comprehensive land use planning and
8 transportation planning within a single organization on the growth
9 management act;

10 (b) The legal, financial, and programmatic impacts on the enabling
11 legislation of existing local authorities;

12 (c) The stewardship of the state transportation system;

13 (d) The obstacles to standardized public transportation fares;

14 (e) Opportunities to increase greater coordination among transit
15 agencies and to increase transit ridership; and

16 (f) The necessary steps required to transition existing
17 organizations into the new structure.

18 (3) By December 15, 2007, the task force shall submit draft
19 legislation and any supporting materials to the legislative standing
20 committees on transportation.

21 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** This act is necessary for the immediate
22 preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the
23 state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect
24 immediately.

25 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** This act expires January 1, 2009.

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