

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1314

As Reported by House Committee On:
Transportation

Title: An act relating to transportation funding and appropriations.

Brief Description: Making 2009-11 transportation appropriations.

Sponsors: Representatives Clibborn and Liias; by request of Governor Gregoire.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Transportation: 3/30/09, 3/31/09 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Provides appropriations to agencies with transportation-related activities for the 2009-11 biennium.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 16 members: Representatives Clibborn, Chair; Liias, Vice Chair; Dickerson, Driscoll, Eddy, Finn, Moeller, Morris, Rolfes, Sells, Springer, Takko, Upthegrove, Wallace, Williams and Wood.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 12 members: Representatives Roach, Ranking Minority Member; Rodne, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Armstrong, Campbell, Cox, Ericksen, Flannigan, Herrera, Johnson, Klippert, Shea and Simpson.

Staff: Mark Matteson (786-7145)

Background:

The operating and capital expenses of state transportation agencies and programs are funded on a biennial basis by an omnibus Transportation Budget adopted by the Legislature in odd-numbered years. The Transportation Budget provides appropriations to the major transportation agencies including: the Washington State Department of Transportation, the

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Washington State Patrol, the Department of Licensing, the Washington Traffic Safety Commission, the Transportation Improvement Board, the County Road Administration Board, and the Freight Mobility Strategic Investment Board. The budget also provides appropriations out of transportation funds to many smaller agencies with transportation functions.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

Appropriations are made for state transportation agencies and programs for the 2009-11 fiscal biennium. (See House Transportation Committee supporting documents for more detail.)

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The substitute bill makes changes to operating and capital appropriations proposed by the Governor.

Appropriation: Various.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) The Washington State Department of Transportation supports this budget. In an extremely challenging time, the commitment to the highway construction program is greatly appreciated. We feel that the focus on megaprojects is critical. The construction funds for new ferries is helpful. We are happy that this restores the low-cost enhancements for traffic operations. The funding for the Vancouver rail bypass is also restored, which will keep our Amtrak Cascades corridor on track. We support the study to examine mid-term and long-term financing mechanisms. We do have a concern about the reduction in the preservation program in 2011-13.

The Seattle City Council supports this budget. This is the result of a lot of hard work. The budget creates 46,000 jobs over two years. We support all the megaprojects including and especially the Alaskan Way Viaduct (AWV). The City of Seattle, King County, and the Port of Seattle have all worked very hard to arrive at a solution to this. The city has already begun repairs on the seawall. The port has already invested \$17 million for East Marginal Way connections. Our council has endorsed the bored tunnel concept.

The Mayor of Seattle and the city are committed to their share for the viaduct - \$900 million. This agreement will allow us to move forward. We will pay for utility replacements. We have come up with a good creative financing solution that will hold together.

The Commission of the Port of Seattle is in favor of a bored tunnel. This is essential for freight mobility and marine cargo operations. This addresses several priorities, including: the connectivity between industrial areas to the north and south; maintaining capacity for business and growth; and minimizing the disruption to business during reconstruction. Eastern agricultural interests are very much in favor of this approach. The port has worked hard on transportation in the area of the AWW, collaborating with the state and city on the State Route 519 solution. We support going forward to create advisory groups for tunnel portals.

The Chamber of Commerce supports this bill. It funds vital state investments. It is astounding we got consensus on a project the magnitude of the AWW. Yet this is the most viable option. We are impressed by the support from the number of cities and communities north and south of Seattle.

The most expensive aspect of the potential AWW replacement is avoided: disruption to business and other surface activity.

The Carpenters Union supports this bill. It sustains our economy. We are excited about the consensus.

The Association of General Contractors very much supports this bill and would like to see it enacted as soon as possible. Our industry has seen a drop in employment of over 100,000 persons over the last three decades. This bill would help improve prospects for our employees. This is also an important industry in that it pays sales tax on contracts and thus supports the General Fund Budget.

The City of Vancouver supports the inclusion of funding for the Interstate 205/Mill Plain Interchange within the long-term financial plan. This is a very significant project regionally. The City of Ridgefield is grateful for the Ridgefield interchange project. We have a concern about the State Route 502 corridor project, which is not fully funded. This project is in an area where heavy traffic is pushed onto a two-lane rural highway and is a big safety concern.

The Vancouver Rail bypass is included and we very much appreciate it. We appreciate the tolling analysis for the Columbia River Crossing. The committee should explore tax-increment financing as a potential revenue option.

The Vashon Ferry Advisory Committee is pleased that the fare increase for ferries is limited to 2.5 percent per year. We are pleased to see that there are 144-car ferries being considered in the stream. Yet we are somewhat troubled that the funding is not there yet. The timing of funding is critical – we have a boat that is down right now. There is no excess capacity. Thanks for listening to us.

The manufacturers and other businesses in Seattle would be unable to survive business disruption during the reconstruction period if the AWW were to be rebuilt above ground. We appreciate the state and local leadership to get to the tunnel alternative.

The transit association is pleased with a lot of what is being proposed here. We appreciate the \$24 million special needs grants pass-through and the additional \$2 million provided for that purpose. We appreciate the other additional funds provided for the vanpool, commute trip reduction, and rural mobility grant increases. The Regional Mobility Grants proposal is better than the Governor's proposal.

The Washington Roundtable supports the approach to the Vancouver rail bypass project and much of this proposal.

(With concerns) Sound Transit has several concerns about this proposal. First, the delay of projects associated with the agreed-upon plan for two-way transit on Interstate 90 between Bellevue and Seattle (known as alternative "R8A") is troubling. We are also concerned about the proviso restricting the negotiation and development of the two-way R8A light rail across Lake Washington until an asset value for the highway can be established. We are not sure how to interpret this and this could compromise our plans under the plan ("ST2") approved by the voters last fall. We are also disappointed to see that the Sound Transit Regional Mobility Projects were removed from consideration for new funding.

Funding for the interchange on Interstate 5 at 134th street is delayed. This project needs to be funded by 2013 for safety and other reasons.

(Opposed) The Washington Trust for Historic Preservation is concerned that the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation is consolidated into the Department of Parks and Recreation. The bill that would allow this to happen was never considered in the House.

Persons Testifying: (In support) David Dye, Washington State Department of Transportation; Jan Drago, Seattle City Council; Tom Ceis, City of Seattle; Gael Tarleton and Lloyd Hara, Port of Seattle Commission; Tayloe Washburn, Seattle Chamber of Commerce; Bob Donegon, Seattle Historic Waterfront Association and Ivar's; Jon Littel, Carpenter's Union; Duke Schaub, Associated General Contractors of Washington and State Route 99 Corridor Coalition; Mark Brown, Clark County, City of Vancouver, City of Ridgefield, and City of Battle Ground; Rick Wickman, Port of Vancouver and Identity Clark County; Alan Mendel, Vashon Ferry Advisory Committee; Dave Gering, Washington Industrial Council of Seattle; Michael Shaw, Washington State Transit Association; and Michael Groesch, Washington Business Roundtable.

(With concerns) April Putney, Futurewise; Martin Flynn, Sound Transit; and Mike Burgess, Clark County.

(Opposed) Mary Thompson, Washington Trust for Historic Preservation.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.