

SENATE BILL REPORT

ESSB 6392

As Amended by House, March 2, 2010

Title: An act relating to the use of revenue generated from tolling the state route number 520 corridor.

Brief Description: Clarifying the use of revenue generated from tolling the state route number 520 corridor.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Senators Tom, Swecker, Oemig, Holmquist, Jacobsen, Haugen and Marr).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Transportation: 1/21/10, 1/25/10 [DPS, w/oRec].

Passed Senate: 2/16/10, 44-3.

Passed House: 3/02/10, 78-19.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6392 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Haugen, Chair; Marr, Vice Chair; Swecker, Ranking Minority Member; Becker, Berkey, Delvin, Eide, Hatfield, Jacobsen, Kastama, Kauffman, Kilmer, King, Ranker and Sheldon.

Minority Report: That it be referred without recommendation.

Signed by Senator Benton.

Staff: Kelly Simpson (786-7403)

Background: During the 2009 Legislative Session, ESHB 2211 was enacted, authorizing the initial imposition of tolls on the state route (SR) 520 corridor (defined as between interstate 5 and SR 202), to be charged only for travel on the floating bridge portion of the corridor. The bill also limited the use of toll backed bond proceeds to the construction of the replacement floating bridge and necessary landings.

Summary of Engrossed Substitute Bill: Bond proceeds, backed by revenue generated from tolls on the SR 520 corridor, may be used for any project within the SR 520 bridge replacement and high occupancy vehicle (HOV) program, including projects beyond just the

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replacement floating bridge. However, \$200 million in bond proceeds must be used only to fund the west side of the corridor program.

The corridor program must include the following elements, consistent with the legislatively identified total project cost of \$4.65B:

- a minimum carpool occupancy of 3+ persons on the SR 520 HOV lanes;
- HOV lane performance standards;
- a work group to study alternative transit connections at the University of Washington light rail station;
- a work group to make recommendations regarding options for financing high capacity transit through the corridor;
- a mitigation plan for the Washington Park Arboretum;
- a work group to make recommendations regarding design refinements to Washington State Department of Transportation's (WSDOT) preferred alternative; and
- an account into which civil penalties for failing to pay tolls on the corridor are deposited, to be used for any project within the corridor, including mitigation.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: Last year's legislation authorized tolling on SR 520, but limited the use of toll-backed bonds to just the bridge replacement. Roughly \$400-500M may be available in bond proceeds to be used for other projects within the corridor. Washington is currently experiencing a very favorable bid climate, which would help move forward, right away, on those projects in the corridor that are ready to go. Moving sooner than later will help keep costs down. A delay on the SR 520 project will add to the congestion in the corridor and negatively impact the state economy, specifically the efficient movement of freight. This project is vital to the state's economy. The corridor unties the high-tech and the biotech business sectors of Puget Sound. The business community needs assurance that travel times in the corridor are reliable. The project will help improve transit times. The SR 520 project has been studied long enough. Safety of the facility warrants beginning project construction now.

CON: This bill is simply a way to siphon off toll monies.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Tom, prime sponsor; Dave Dye, WSDOT; Nancy Hiteschue, WA Business Roundtable; Councilmember Grant Degginger, City of Bellevue; Mayor George Maitein, City of Clyde Hill; Dave Overstreet, AAA of WA.

CON: Paul W. Locke.

House Amendment(s):

1. Allows the identified \$200 million in bond proceeds dedicated to projects on the Interstate 5 to Medina portion of the project to be used for effective connections for HOVs and transit to the extent the connections improve or benefit the operation of SR 520.
2. Expands each requirement in the bill regarding effective connections for transit to the light rail station at the University of Washington to the entire University Link light rail line.
3. Requires that the additional program elements created by the bill be consistent with the legislative intent that the bridge open to vehicular traffic in 2014.
4. Requires the Seattle Mayor and City Council, in place of the WSDOT, to convene the work group making alternative recommendations for transit connections, and allows the Mayor or City Council to designate other organizations or persons to join the work group. However, requires WSDOT to convene the work group in the event the city of Seattle fails to do so.
5. Requires the work group making alternative recommendations for transit connections to make recommendations that are within the scope of the supplemental draft environmental impact statement and to consider techniques such as grade separation, additional stations, and pedestrian lids; and changes the submission date of the work group's report from July 5, 2010, to October 1, 2010.
6. Requires the work group making recommendations regarding options for financing high capacity transit in the SR 520 corridor to also make recommendations regarding options for planning for high capacity transit in the SR 520 corridor.
7. Changes the submission date from July 5, 2010, to December 31, 2010, for the report of the work group to make recommendations regarding design refinements to the preferred alternative.
8. Limits the height of the floating bridge portion of the project to 20 feet from the water to the top of the bridge rail.
9. Allows the new account to keep the interest earnings.