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## Transportation Committee

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### HB 1745

**Brief Description:** Addressing the high occupancy toll lanes on state route 167.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Clibborn, Liias, Farrell, Fitzgibbon, Moscoso, Habib, Bergquist, Ryu, Tarleton, Moeller, Riccelli and Fey; by request of Department of Transportation.

#### Brief Summary of Bill

- Removes the expiration provisions from high occupancy tolling lanes on State Route 167, and removes the "pilot project" designation.
- Allows the Washington State Department of Transportation to extend high occupancy tolling lanes into Pierce County.

**Hearing Date:** 2/18/13

**Staff:** Andrew Russell (786-7143).

#### Background:

If authorized by the Legislature, the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) is empowered to plan, analyze, and construct toll facilities in Washington. The Washington State Transportation Commission is in charge of setting toll rates on these facilities. Any toll revenue may be used only to cover the operating costs of the toll facility, to meet repayment obligations and financing costs, to meet other obligations to provide funding, to provide for the operations of conveying people or goods, or for any improvements to the facility.

In 2005 as part of a pilot program, the WSDOT was authorized to operate high occupancy toll lanes on State Route 167 within King County. The WSDOT charges a toll on these lanes as a means of regulating access to or the use of the lanes in order to maintain speed and reliability. The toll rate changes depending upon the congestion, time of day, traffic volume, and traffic flow, and the WSDOT's goal is to keep an average speed of 45 miles per hour in these lanes. The tolls are in effect from 5 a.m. to 7 p.m.; however, the tolls do not apply to vehicles carrying two

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or more passengers. Additionally, tolls are not charged to transit buses or vanpool vehicles owned or operated by a public agency.

This pilot program is scheduled to expire on June 30, 2013.

**Summary of Bill:**

The high occupancy toll lanes program on State Route 167 is no longer a "pilot program" and does not automatically expire. Additionally, the WSDOT is empowered to extend the use of high occupancy toll lanes on State Route 167 into Pierce County. Authorized emergency vehicles are now included in the list of vehicles that are not assessed a toll for using the lanes. Finally, several provisions relating to the lanes as a "pilot project" are no longer in the law.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

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