
Transportation Committee

HB 1814

Brief Description: Concerning the agency council on coordinated transportation.

Sponsors: Representatives Ryu, Clibborn, Johnson, Angel, Freeman, Zeiger, Bergquist, Reykdal, Liias, Moeller, Morris, Farrell and Fey.

<p style="text-align: center;">Brief Summary of Bill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reauthorizes and reestablishes the Agency Council on Coordinated Transportation with essentially the same membership, requirements, and duties.

Hearing Date: 2/19/13

Staff: David Munnecke (786-7315).

Background:

The state-authorized Agency Council on Coordinated Transportation (ACCT) was a council of state agencies, transportation providers, consumer advocates, and legislators which was created in 1998 in order to advance and improve accessibility to and coordination of statewide transportation services for persons with special transportation needs, which means those persons, including their personal attendants, who, because of physical or mental disability, income status, or age, are unable to transport themselves or to purchase transportation.

The ACCT was made up of 14 voting members, 11 of whom were appointed by the Governor according to certain statutory prescriptions, with the remaining three consisting of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Secretary of the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), and the Director of the Health Care Authority, or their designees. There were also four nonvoting members, one each from the two largest caucuses in both the House of Representatives and the Senate.

Since enactment, the ACCT was reauthorized several times. In 2007 the Legislature reauthorized the ACCT until June 30, 2010, and modified and streamlined the ACCT's duties. In 2007 the

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Legislature also directed the Joint Transportation Committee to study legal and programmatic changes and best practices necessary for providing effective coordination of special needs transportation. That study, finalized in January 2009, resulted in a number of recommendations, including the need to strengthen the ACCT's role as a statewide oversight authority and to establish the necessary infrastructure that responds to local circumstances and needs.

In 2009 the ACCT was reauthorized until June 30, 2011, and all related sections of the Revised Code of Washington were reauthorized until June 30, 2012.

Federal Coordination Requirements.

In 2005 the federal Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) was enacted, which conditions receipt of certain federally funded public transportation grant projects on the establishment of locally developed, coordinated public transportation plans.

The SAFETEA-LU guidance issued by the Federal Transportation Administration indicates that each plan should identify special transportation needs, prioritize services, and establish comprehensive strategies for meeting special transportation needs. The new federal requirement is addressed in the planning process of regional transportation planning organizations or metropolitan planning organizations.

Summary of Bill:

The Agency Council on Coordinated Transportation (ACCT) is reauthorized and reestablished to consist of 14 voting members and four non-voting legislative members. The 14 voting members are: the Secretary of Transportation or his or her designee; the Secretary of the Department of Social and Health Services or his or her designee; the Superintendent of Public Instruction or his or her designee; and 11 members appointed by the Governor, representing consumers of special needs transportation, pupil transportation, the Community Transportation Association of the Northwest, the Community Action Council Association, the State Transit Association, regional transportation planning organizations and metropolitan planning organizations, medicaid brokers, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and the Association of Counties. The four non-voting legislative members include two members from the House of Representatives and two Senators, representing each caucus and the House and Senate Transportation Committees or the House Appropriations and Senate Ways and Means committees.

Council meetings are required to be open to the public, with agendas published in advance and minutes kept and made available to the public. Council meetings must also be held in locations that are readily accessible to public transportation and at a time when public transportation is available. The WSDOT is required to provide necessary support to ACCT as resources allow.

The Council's duties include the following: focus on results and projects that identify and address barriers to facilitating a statewide approach to coordinated transportation systems for persons with special needs; develop statewide guidelines for customer complaint processes; represent the needs and interests of persons with special transportation needs in statewide efforts for emergency and disaster preparedness planning; and submit an annual progress report to the Legislature beginning on December 1, 2015.

The focus of the ACCT is specifically directed to the projects on which members of the ACCT are willing to donate time, with an emphasis on:

- coordinated human services transportation;
- cost and ride sharing;
- performance measures;
- mobility management; and
- addressing underserved populations.

Beginning July 1, 2015, and every four years thereafter, each regional transportation planning organization (RTPO) is required to submit to the Council an updated plan that includes certain elements identified by the Council that are consistent with federal planning requirements. Every two years, each RTPO must submit to the Council a prioritized regional human service and transportation project list.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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