SENATE BILL REPORT
SB 5854

As of February 26, 2013

Title: An act relating to the Tacoma Narrows toll bridge account.

Brief Description: Addressing debt service from the Tacoma Narrows toll bridge account.

Sponsors: Senators Dammeier, Carrell and Becker.

Brief History:
   Committee Activity: Transportation: 2/26/13.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

   Staff: Clint McCarthy (786-7319)

   Background: The new Tacoma Narrows Bridge opened to traffic on July 16, 2007, as a toll bridge. The bridge cost $735 million to complete and was funded by selling general obligation bonds that were backed by the Motor Vehicle Account and the full faith and credit of the state of Washington. The debt structure for the bonds used to build the Tacoma Narrows Bridge was set up for low-debt service payments in the early years. Debt payments were scheduled to increase over time, and it was assumed that the increase in payments would be covered through an increase in traffic volumes. For fiscal year (FY) 2013, the planned debt service is $45.3 million. In FY 2030, the planned debt service will be $85.8 million.

   Summary of Bill: Monies transferred from the Tacoma Narrows Toll Bridge Account to pay for debt service is limited to $60 million per fiscal year. Monies in excess of $60 million that are needed to cover the debt service on the Tacoma Narrows Bridge would be loaned to the Tacoma Narrows Toll Bridge Account from the Motor Vehicle Fund. The state must continue to toll the Tacoma Narrows Bridge until the Motor Vehicle Fund is paid in full.

   Appropriation: None.

   Fiscal Note: Requested on February 25, 2013.

   Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

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