
Transportation Committee

HB 1404

Brief Description: Requiring a bistate work group for certain transportation projects.

Sponsors: Representatives Wylie, Moeller and Tarleton.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Defines a bistate megaproject as a highway construction project valued at \$500 million or more that extends across the border between Washington and another state.
- Requires the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) to notify the House and Senate Transportation Committees when it initiates work with another state to prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) on a bistate megaproject.
- Requires the WSDOT to establish a bistate megaproject work group in conjunction with developing the EIS.

Hearing Date: 2/5/15

Staff: Alyssa Ball (786-7140).

Background:

The Interstate 5 (I-5) Bridge crosses the Columbia River and connects Vancouver, Washington, and Portland, Oregon, with two identical bridge structures. One bridge structure carries traffic northbound to Vancouver, and the other bridge structure carries traffic southbound to Portland. The northbound bridge was built in 1917, and the southbound bridge was built in 1958. The Columbia River Crossing (CRC) Project, as described in the record of decision, will replace the I-5 bridges, extend light rail to Vancouver, improve closely spaced interchanges, and enhance the pedestrian and bicycle paths. The estimated project costs range from \$3.1 billion to \$3.5 billion. Between 2005 and 2013, \$196.6 million was spent on the project, with the WSDOT spending \$94.1 million and the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) spending \$102.5 million. The project was discontinued officially in the spring of 2014.

Summary of Bill:

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

A bistate megaproject is defined as a highway construction project valued at \$500 million or more that extends across the border between Washington and another state.

The WSDOT is required to notify the House and Senate Transportation Committees when it initiates work with another state to prepare an EIS on a bistate megaproject.

In conjunction with developing the EIS with the other state, the WSDOT must establish a bistate megaproject workgroup in order to assist the WSDOT in the preparation of the EIS and to facilitate communication between the legislative bodies and key stakeholders of the respective states. The workgroup will serve as an advisory body and must, at a minimum, consist of members of the legislatures of both states, representatives of the executive branches of both states, and other appropriate public and private stakeholders. The WSDOT must provide administrative and staff support to the work group as necessary.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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