

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 2815

As of February 23, 2016

Title: An act relating to modifying the eligibility requirements for certain counties with ferry terminals to form a regional transportation planning organization.

Brief Description: Modifying the eligibility requirements for certain counties with ferry terminals to form a regional transportation planning organization.

Sponsors: Representatives Hayes, Smith, Lytton and Morris.

Brief History: Passed House: 2/16/16, 94-4.

Committee Activity: Transportation: 2/23/16.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Staff: Kelly Simpson (786-7403)

Background: Under current state law, Regional Transportation Planning Organizations (RTPO) are voluntary associations of local governments within a county, or within geographically contiguous counties, created primarily to prepare regional transportation plans and to ensure local and regional coordination of transportation planning within counties. An RTPO can cover both urban and rural areas and receives state funding in support of its planning efforts.

An RTPO must contain at least one county with a population of at least 100,000 or contain at least three counties, include all counties in the region, and contain at least 60 percent of the cities and towns in the region representing at least 75 percent of the cities' and towns' populations.

There are currently RTPOs covering 36 of the 39 counties in Washington. Island, Okanogan, and San Juan counties are not part of any RTPO.

Summary of Bill: A county or counties with a population of at least 75,000 that also contains a Washington State Ferries terminal may form an RTPO.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect on July 1, 2016.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: Island Co and Skagit Co previously served together as an RTPO. However, Skagit Co reached the statutory population of 100,000 and separated and created its own RTPO. Island Co currently does not, on its own, meet the minimum population thresholds in statute. The bill would allow Island Co to create its own RTPO in order to conduct important transportation planning activities, including concurrency issues.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Representative Hayes, Sponsor; Jill Johnson, Island County Commissioner.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.