
Transportation Committee

HB 1222

Brief Description: Creating a bistate bridge project legislative work group.

Sponsors: Representatives Pike, Tarleton, Orcutt, Shea, Rodne, Gregerson and McBride.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Establishes a bistate, bipartisan bridge project work group.
- Requires the work group to identify the most affordable, efficient project that improves freight mobility, safety, and congestion on Interstate 5 adjacent to and over the Columbia River.
- Specifies that the work group should be made up of a bipartisan group of legislators from Washington and Oregon whose districts are adjacent to the project, with a preference for members who serve on their respective transportation committees.
- Requires a report on any recommendations by December 1, 2018.

Hearing Date: 2/20/17

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 Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) spending \$94.1 million and the Oregon Department of

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Transportation (ODOT) spending \$102.5 million. The project was discontinued officially in the spring of 2014.

Summary of Bill:

A bistate bridge project legislative work group is created with the purpose of identifying the most affordable, efficient project that improves freight mobility and safety, relieves traffic congestion, and meets the future needs of the region and the transportation corridor. The work group must establish a 10-year plan, a 25-year plan, and a 50-year plan for the corridor. Additionally, the work group will define and recommend the ongoing legislative role in moving the bistate bridge project forward.

The work group must consist of eight bipartisan, bicameral members from both the Washington and Oregon state legislatures who represent the districts in the same region as the project, with a preference for members who serve on their respective transportation committees. Each legislative member must have equal voting power. Local, regional, technical, legal, and other planning and transportation resources and stakeholders may not be precluded from appropriate involvement, but may not have any voting powers.

By December 1, 2018, the work group must report its recommendations to the transportation committees of the Legislature and provide annual updates on the project to the Legislature thereafter until the project is complete.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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