

FINAL BILL REPORT

SSB 5806

C 288 L 17
Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Concerning preliminary work to develop a process for planning for a new Interstate 5 bridge spanning the Columbia river.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Senators Cleveland, Rivers, Wilson, Hobbs, Chase and Nelson).

Senate Committee on Transportation
House Committee on Transportation

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; the other bridge structure carries traffic southbound to Portland. The northbound bridge was built in 1917; the southbound bridge was built in 1958. The bridges both include one vertical lift span.

In 1997, a process was enacted to expedite the development of industrial projects of statewide significance. To qualify for designation as a project of statewide significance, a project must meet capital investment or job creation requirements. Border-crossing projects, private projects investing in manufacturing, research, and development, projects that will provide a net environmental benefit, and a project that will further commercialization of an innovation may all be designated as projects of statewide significance. An application for designation as a project of statewide significance must be submitted to the Department of Commerce. The application must include a letter of approval from jurisdictions where a project is located and must commit to providing the local staff necessary to expedite the completion of a project.

Counties and cities requesting a project's designation as one of statewide significance must ensure the participation of local officials on the public-private team expediting a project's completion. Counties and cities with projects must enter into agreements with the Office of Regulatory Assistance (ORA) and local project managers to expedite the processes necessary for the design and construction of projects. ORA must provide facilitation and coordination services to expedite completion of industrial projects of statewide significance. The project proponents may provide the funding necessary for the local jurisdiction to hire the staff required to expedite the process.

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.

Summary: The process for designating a project of statewide significance is modified to allow for a legislative designation. Projects of statewide significance that are designated by the Legislature are exempted from the application requirements.

A joint Oregon-Washington legislative action committee is established regarding the construction of a new I-5 bridge. The committee is tasked with achieving the following purposes:

- works with both states' departments of transportation, transportation commissions, and stakeholders to begin a process toward project development;
- reviews and confirms lead roles related to permitting, construction, operation, and maintenance of a future I-5 bridge project;
- establishes a process to seek public comment on the I-5 bridge project development plan;
- works to ensure that there are sufficient resources available to the state departments of transportation to inventory and utilize existing data to allow for non-duplicative and efficient decision-making regarding a new project;
- examines all potential mass transit options available for a new I-5 bridge project;
- utilizes design build procurement or better innovative project delivery method and determines the least costly, most efficient project management and best practices tools;
- considers the creation of a Columbia River bridge authority to review bridge needs and make recommendations to both states regarding financing, timing of improvements, and operations of the bridges; and
- reports to the Legislatures of each state the findings and recommendations of the legislative action committee by December 15, 2018.

The joint legislative action committee is comprised of sixteen members, eight from each state. The majority leader and minority leader of the Senate of both states must appoint four members, two from each of the two largest caucuses. The Speaker and minority leader of the House of Representatives of both states must appoint four members, two from each of the two largest caucuses. Staff support must be provided by the Senate Committee Services, the House Office of Program Research, and if the Oregon Legislature accepts the invitation to form the joint legislative action committee, the Oregon legislative policy and research office. Each meeting of the legislative action committee must allow an opportunity for public comment.

State agencies are required to provide reasonable technical support to the legislative action committee when requested.

The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) must conduct a planning inventory to document existing planning data related to the construction of a new I-5 bridge. WSDOT must report back to the Legislature on the details of the planning inventory.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	45	4	
House	59	37	(House amended)
Senate	44	4	(Senate concurred)

Effective: July 23, 2017