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**SENATE BILL 5667**

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**State of Washington 69th Legislature 2025 Regular Session**

**By** Senators Valdez, Nobles, Chapman, Lovelett, Pedersen, Shewmake, and Slatter

AN ACT Relating to establishing intercity passenger rail improvement priorities; and adding a new section to chapter 47.79 RCW.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 47.79 RCW to read as follows:

(1) The legislature recognizes that intercity passenger rail is an integral part of the state's transportation system and is critical to the state's ability to meet the climate, public health, equity, and mobility goals of the state as it continues to experience growth. The legislature finds that intercity passenger rail is a highly efficient mode of transportation that connects small towns and major urban centers, and that the improvement of intercity passenger rail service through improvements to trip times, frequency, and reliability can enhance local economies and increase mobility options for Washington residents. Therefore, the legislature intends to reemphasize the need to prioritize the improvement of intercity passenger rail in the state by establishing updated targets for the department to use as it develops future plans for the Amtrak Cascades route, and by requiring clear communication about the factors that influence what is achievable so that they can be properly evaluated and, where possible, addressed.

(2) The following targets, with a goal of being met by 2035, are established for the Amtrak Cascades service:

(a) Two hour and 30 minute trip times between Seattle and Portland, with a minimum of 14 roundtrips per day;

(b) Two hour and 45 minute trip times between Seattle and Vancouver, British Columbia, with a minimum of five roundtrips per day; and

(c) A minimum trip reliability of 88 percent on-time performance.

(3)(a) The department is required to prioritize the targets set in subsection (2) of this section as it conducts project development work, including for the federal corridor identification and development program and for work that may be done in the future as part of the federal-state partnership for intercity passenger rail grant program. Project development work carried out by the department must include infrastructure investments and extensive coordination with host railroads, and other service partners, as necessary to achieve these targets.

(b)(i) If the department finds that one or more of the targets set in subsection (2) of this section cannot be achieved due to a constraint unless it is mitigated by the legislature or another party, it must provide a full explanation of the constraint and detail what is necessary to mitigate it as part of the annual reporting requirement under (c) of this subsection.

(ii) If the department finds that one or more of the targets set in subsection (2) of this section cannot be achieved due to a constraint that cannot be mitigated, even with assistance from the legislature or another party, it must provide a detailed explanation of the reasons it believes a target should be modified, either temporarily or for the indefinite future, to accommodate the identified unavoidable constraint as part of the annual reporting requirement under (c) of this subsection.

(c) The department must provide updates in an annual report to the transportation committees of the legislature, as well as to the joint transportation committee, on the department's progress in working towards the targets set in subsection (2) of this section by December 1st of each calendar year. The annual updates must include any information required to be disclosed under (b) of this subsection.

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