
Transportation Committee

HB 1313

Brief Description: Transferring the authority to intervene on behalf of railroad shippers to the department of transportation.

Sponsors: Representatives Eddy, Hankins and Kenney; by request of Utilities & Transportation Commission.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Transfers the authority to intervene in proceedings before the federal Surface Transportation Board related to the abandonment of rail lines and excessive or discriminatory rates or practices from the Utilities and Transportation Commission to the Department of Transportation.

Hearing Date: 2/8/07

Staff: David Munnecke (786-7315).

Background:

The Utilities and Transportation Commission has a statutory duty to intervene with the federal government on behalf of shippers on issues related to the abandonment of rail lines, and excessive or discriminatory interstate rates, fares, charges, classifications, rules or practices.

Over the past several decades, the federal government has preempted state authority regarding the economic regulation of railroads and motor carriers. The authority to regulate economic aspects of rail service was also transferred to the federal Surface Transportation Board when the Interstate Commerce Commission was abolished.

Summary of Bill:

The authority to intervene in federal government proceedings related to the abandonment of rail lines and excessive or discriminatory rates or practices is transferred from the Utilities and Transportation Commission to the Department of Transportation. The authority to intervene in these proceedings is also made optional rather than mandatory.

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.

The statutory language is updated to reflect the elimination of the Interstate Commerce Commission and the transfer of the relevant obligations to the federal Surface Transportation Board.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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