
Transportation Committee

HB 2041

Brief Description: Clarifying goals, objectives, and responsibilities of certain transportation agencies.

Sponsors: Representatives Jarrett, Simpson, Curtis, Clibborn, Campbell, Armstrong, Ormsby, Schindler, Wallace, P. Sullivan, Ericksen and Linville.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Streamlines existing policy goals, and establishes five overarching policy goals for the planning, operation, performance of, and investment in, the state's transportation system.
- Declares the Legislature's intent that the Governor establish objectives and performance measures for all agencies with transportation-related responsibilities, for the purpose of ensuring that transportation system performance attains the newly-established policy goals.
- Requires that the Washington Transportation Commission submit a baseline performance report on attainment of the newly-established policy goals by October 1, 2007, to the Legislature, and submit its first annual attainment report to the Legislature and the Governor by October 1, 2008.

Hearing Date: 2/22/07

Staff: Kathryn Leathers (786-7114).

Background:

Over the years, the Legislature has adopted numerous goals, objectives, and benchmarks applicable to the state's transportation system. Responding to a recommendation made by the Blue Ribbon Commission on Transportation to adopt transportation benchmarks, the 2002 Legislature stated its intent that policy goals must be created for the operation, performance of, and investment in the state's transportation system.

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.

In 2005, the Legislature directed the Transportation Performance Audit Board (TPAB) to, among other things, study and make recommendations for modifying existing transportation goals and benchmarks, and to review the comprehensive 10-year investment program process and the corresponding statutory investment criteria. The resulting study made several recommendations, including the recommendations that existing statutes, benchmarks, and other investment criteria be replaced by new legislation that establishes and aligns overarching goals for the state transportation system, and that the adopted goals should be those goals capable of being measured consistently from year to year.

During the 2006 interim, the Joint Transportation Committee continued the work begun by the TPAB, by commissioning a report to make specific recommendations for aligning benchmarks and goals, and adjusting reporting requirements. This recently-completed report recommends revising and streamlining various existing state transportation system goals, objectives, and responsibilities, and the process by which these elements are measured and reported on.

Summary of Bill:

The state's policy goals for the investment in, and the planning, operation, and performance of the state's transportation system are streamlined into the following five policy goals:

- *Preservation*: To maintain, preserve, and extend the life and utility of prior investments in transportation systems and services;
- *Safety*: To provide for and improve the safety and security of transportation customers and the transportation system;
- *Mobility*: To improve the predictable movement of goods and people throughout Washington State;
- *Environment*: To enhance Washington's quality of life through transportation investments that promote energy conservation, enhance healthy communities, and protect the environment; and
- *Stewardship*: To be effective managers of the transportation system.

The revised policy goals are intended to be the basis for establishing detailed and measurable objectives and related performance measures. The Legislature states its intent that the Governor establish objectives and performance measures for all state transportation agencies in order to assure that transportation system performance attains the five policy goals established in statute. The Governor is directed to submit the objectives and performance measures to the Legislature on a biennial basis.

The Washington Transportation Commission (Commission) is required to submit to the Legislature a baseline performance report on attainment of the newly-established policy goals by October 1, 2007. An annual attainment report must be submitted to the Legislature and Governor by October 1, 2008, and by October 1 every year thereafter. The report must include the degree to which state transportation projects and programs attained the policy goals.

Existing transportation goals, objectives, and benchmarks are streamlined, consolidated, and aligned. Various duties applicable to certain transportation agencies are revised to ensure they are performed consistent with the revised policy goals, objectives, and performance measures. Provisions regarding the establishment of the state's proposed 10-year investment program are revised, and the responsibility for proposing a comprehensive 10-year investment plan is shifted

from the Commission to the Office of Financial Management. Finally, it is clarified that improvements to highways of statewide significance are essential public facilities.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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