
Transportation Committee

SSB 5412

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

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Senators Murray, Swecker, Marr, Clements and Haugen).

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Establishes five overarching policy goals for the planning, operation, performance of, and investment in, the state's transportation system, and streamlines existing transportation goals and objectives.
- Declares the Legislature's intent that the Office of Financial Management (OFM) establish objectives and performance measures for all agencies with transportation-related responsibilities.
- Requires that the Washington State Transportation Commission (WTC) submit a baseline performance report on attainment of the newly established policy goals by December 2007 to the Legislature, and submit its first subsequent biennial attainment report to the Legislature and Governor by October 1, 2008.
- Shifts the responsibility for proposing a comprehensive 10-year investment program from the WTC to the OFM.

Hearing Date: 3/26/07

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

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.

Legislature stated its intent that policy goals must be created for the operation of, performance of, and investment in the state's transportation system.

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;
- *Environment:* To enhance Washington' 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 OFM 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. Initial objectives and performance measures must be submitted to the Legislature and the WTC during the 2008 legislative session. Thereafter, the OFM must submit objectives and performance measures to the Legislature and WTC on a biennial basis.

The WTC is required to submit to the Legislature a baseline performance report on attainment of the newly established policy goals by December 2007. Thereafter, a biennial attainment report must be submitted to the Legislature and Governor, with the first report due by October 1, 2008. 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. Additionally, provisions regarding the establishment of the state's proposed ten-year investment program are revised, and the responsibility for proposing a comprehensive 10-year investment plan is shifted from the WTC to the OFM. 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.