

# FINAL BILL REPORT

## ESHB 2211

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**C 472 L 09**  
Synopsis as Enacted

**Brief Description:** Addressing the authorization, administration, collection, and enforcement of tolls on the state route number 520 corridor.

**Sponsors:** House Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Representatives Clibborn, Eddy, Maxwell and Liias).

**House Committee on Transportation**  
**Senate Committee on Transportation**

### **Background:**

The State Route (SR) 520 Evergreen Point Bridge is a 1.5 mile, 43-year-old bridge crossing Lake Washington in King County. The bridge is scheduled for replacement due to its vulnerability to seismic activity and storm events. In addition to the deteriorating physical condition, the bridge lacks shoulders for disabled and emergency vehicles and experiences considerable amounts of congestion.

### SR 520 Bridge Replacement Project Planning.

Legislation passed during the 2007 session directed the Office of Financial Management to hire a mediator and appropriate planning staff to develop a project impact plan for addressing the impacts of the project design on Seattle city neighborhoods and parks, including the Washington park arboretum, and institutions of higher education. The final project impact plan was provided by the December 1, 2008, delivery date, and identified the three options for the replacement facility that are currently being studied.

Legislation passed during the 2008 session created the SR 520 Tolling Implementation Committee (Committee), consisting of three members, the Puget Sound Regional Council Executive Director, the Secretary of the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) or his or her designee, and a member of the Washington State Transportation Commission from King County. The Committee was required to evaluate various issues relating to the SR 520 bridge replacement project, including the form the tolling might take, traffic diversion, tolling and traffic management technology, and partnership opportunities, and also was required to survey citizens about the project. A report was delivered from the Committee to the Governor and Legislature in January of 2009.

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*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 that same 2008 legislation, the project design is required to have six total lanes, with four general purpose lanes and two lanes that are for high occupancy vehicle travel and transit. The bridge must also be designed to accommodate effective connections for transit, including high capacity transit, to the light rail station at the University of Washington.

Lake Washington Urban Partnership.

In 2007 the WSDOT was awarded a grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation's Congestion Initiative, known as the Lake Washington Urban Partnership. The grant provided \$139 million, of which \$86 million was provided for active traffic management (such as traveler information and speed harmonization) and variable tolling on the SR 520 bridge. All but \$1.6 million of the grant is only accessible once a variable tolling policy has been approved, legal authority exists for tolling to commence, and variable tolling is implemented on the SR 520 bridge project.

**Summary:**

The imposition of tolls on the SR 520 corridor, which is defined as the section of SR 520 between Interstate 5 and SR 202, is authorized. The tolling authority is required to set a schedule of toll rates to maintain travel time, speed, and reliability in the corridor as well as support the issuance of bonds. The tolling authority is allowed to increase the toll rates as necessary to reflect inflation, meet the payments on the bonds, and provide for operations and maintenance of the facility. The expenditure of the proceeds of the bonds is restricted to construction of the replacement floating bridge and necessary landings.

The intent of the Legislature is declared to be that:

- early tolling authorization is provided in order to obtain urban partnership grant funding;
- toll revenues be used to replace the floating bridge;
- the total cost of the corridor not exceed \$4.65 billion;
- the tolling policy for the corridor be reconsidered if the tolls on the SR 520 corridor significantly impact the performance of nearby facilities; and
- the WSDOT apply for federal stimulus funds for projects in the corridor.

The SR 520 workgroup is created, which consists of the Secretary of the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), all the legislators from the 43rd and 48th legislative districts, two legislators from each of the 46th and 45th legislative district, the chairs of the legislative transportation committees, a legislator from the joint transportation committee appointed by each chair, and the transportation committee member from King County. The workgroup must develop a financing plan for the SR 520 corridor that is based on a total cost of \$4.65 billion for all the projects in the corridor. The workgroup is also required, while operating in a westside subgroup, to work with the Department of Transportation and community groups to recommend design options for the SR 520 corridor that are in keeping with the current law. The creation of a similar eastside subgroup is allowed, but not required. The recommendations regarding the finance plan and the design options are both due to the Legislature by January 1, 2010.

The State Route 520 Corridor Account (Account) is created, and all the proceeds of the bonds issued for the construction of the SR 520 corridor, all the tolls generated on the

corridor, any interest earned on these funds, the proceeds from the sale of surplus property used for construction on the corridor, and any liquidated damages must be deposited into the Account. These revenues may only be used for purposes consistent with the tolling expenditure guidelines in statute and the repayment of bonds.

**Votes on Final Passage:**

House	52	46	
Senate	32	16	(Senate amended)
House	52	42	(House concurred)
House	52	43	

**Effective:** August 1, 2009