

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5795

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Transportation, February 17, 2009

Title: An act relating to the Tacoma Narrows toll bridge account.

Brief Description: Modifying the use of funds from the Tacoma Narrows toll bridge account.

Sponsors: Senators Kilmer and Franklin.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Transportation: 2/12/09, 2/17/09 [DPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5795 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Haugen, Chair; Swecker, Ranking Minority Member; Becker, Berkey, Delvin, Eide, Jarrett, Kastama, Kauffman, Kilmer, King, Ranker and Sheldon.

Staff: Amanda Cecil (786-7429)

Background: The Tacoma Narrows Toll Bridge Account houses all the revenues associated with the bridge, including toll revenue. Authorized expenditures from this account include any required costs to finance, operate, maintain, manage, and repair the facility.

Summary of Bill (Recommended Substitute): The Tacoma Narrows Toll Bridge Account may only be used to pay required costs that contribute directly to the financing, operation, maintenance, management, and repair of the facility. The account may not be used for expenditures that do not contribute directly to the financing, operation, maintenance, management, and emergency repairs of the facility. The Transportation Commission determines by rule what is an authorized expense and what is an unauthorized expense.

The Washington State Department of Transportation provides quarterly expenditure reports to the public on the department's website, using current resources.

EFFECT OF CHANGES MADE BY TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE (Recommended Substitute): This bill was amended in committee to remove the list of

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examples of expenditures that do not contribute directly to the financing, operation, maintenance, management, and emergency repairs of the facility. Language was added to give the Transportation Commission the responsibility of defining in rule what constitutes an authorized expenditure and what constitutes an unauthorized expenditure.

The word "emergency" was removed from subsections three and four before the word "repairs."

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Original Bill: PRO: The Community Advisory Committee (CAC) has been looking at what types of expenditures come out of the account and agree that this is a policy decision that needs to be made by the Legislature. The current law is very vague about what is authorized and needs to be refined to make it clear to the agency what is allowed and what is not.

OTHER: By adding the word emergency to the bill it might not allow the agency to make nonemergency repairs to the bridge.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Robert Ryan, CAC; Randy Boss, Todd Iverson, citizens; Dan O'Neal, Transportation Commission Chair.

OTHER: Craig Stone, Ted Trepanier, WSDOT.