

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2123

As Reported by House Committee On: Transportation

Title: An act relating to modifying the transportation system policy goal of mobility.

Brief Description: Modifying the transportation system policy goal of mobility.

Sponsors: Representatives Zeiger, Clibborn, Orcutt, Hargrove, Pollet, Haler, Scott, Morrell, Hayes, Moscoso and Magendanz.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Transportation: 2/4/14, 2/6/14 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Includes congestion relief and improved freight mobility in the definition of the existing transportation system policy goal of mobility.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 23 members: Representatives Clibborn, Chair; Moscoso, Vice Chair; Orcutt, Ranking Minority Member; Hargrove, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Overstreet, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Bergquist, Habib, Hawkins, Hayes, Johnson, Klippert, Kochmar, Moeller, Muri, Ortiz-Self, Pike, Riccelli, Ryu, Sells, Shea, Takko, Young and Zeiger.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 6 members: Representatives Farrell, Vice Chair; Fey, Vice Chair; Fitzgibbon, Morris, Tarleton and Walkinshaw.

Staff: David Munnecke (786-7315).

Background:

There are currently six statewide transportation system policy goals for the planning, operation, performance of, and investment in, the state's transportation system. These policy goals are identified as follows:

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- economic vitality: to promote and develop transportation systems that stimulate, support, and enhance the movement of people and goods to ensure a prosperous economy;
- 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's quality of life through transportation investments that promote energy conservation, enhance healthy communities, and protect the environment; and
- stewardship: to continuously improve the quality, effectiveness, and efficiency of the transportation system.

The Office of Financial Management (OFM) is required to establish objectives and performance measures for all state transportation agencies in order to assure that transportation system performance attains the six policy goals established in statute. The OFM was required to submit to the Legislature and the Washington State Transportation Commission (WSTC) a baseline report on initial objectives and performance measures for attainment of the newly established policy goals during the 2008 legislative session. Subsequent attainment reports are required to be submitted to the Legislature and the WSTC in each even-numbered year thereafter.

The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) is also required to perform certain duties to support attainment of the statewide transportation system policy goals. These duties include: (1) maintaining an inventory of the condition of structures and corridors, as well as a list of structures and corridors in most urgent need of retrofit or rehabilitation; (2) developing long-term financing plans that sustainably support ongoing maintenance and preservation of the transportation infrastructure; (3) balancing system safety and convenience to accommodate all users of the system to safely, reliably, and efficiently provide mobility to people and goods; (4) developing strategies to reduce vehicle miles traveled and considering efficiency tools to manage system demand; (5) considering a variety of efficiency and demand management tools; (6) promoting integrated multimodal planning; and (7) considering engineers and architects to design environmentally sustainable, context sensitive transportation systems.

Summary of Bill:

The definition of the transportation system policy goal of mobility is modified to include congestion relief and improved freight mobility.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) This bill includes congestion relief and improved freight mobility in the state's transportation policy goals, which would be good for freight movement throughout the state as well as for commuters. Predictability is not enough. There needs to be improvement.

It's amazing that relieving traffic congestion is not a priority. The Texas Transportation Institute has estimated that Washington loses \$2.2 billion per year in lost time and wasted fuel. The state auditor has also stated in an audit of the transportation system that reducing traffic congestion should be a priority.

(Other) In a recent poll, 58 percent of respondents rated traffic congestion as a priority. Until 2008 the state's transportation performance measures focused on relieving traffic congestion, and they should do so again.

(Opposed) House Bill 2123 appears to focus on traffic congestion more than on other needs. In Washington 99.2 percent of the congestion hours occur in the Central Puget Sound, so this bill appears to focus the WSDOT's efforts on that area alone rather than throughout the state.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Representative Zeiger, prime sponsor; and Michael Ennis, Association of Washington Business.

(Other) Bob Pishue, Washington Policy Center.

(Opposed) Blake Trask, Washington Bikes.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.