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**HOUSE BILL 1457**

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**State of Washington 67th Legislature 2021 Regular Session**

**By** Representatives Wylie, Riccelli, Kloba, Santos, Slatter, Shewmake, Ramel, and Hackney

AN ACT Relating to facilitating the installation of broadband facilities on limited access highways; amending RCW 47.52.001; and creating a new section.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

**Sec.**  RCW 47.52.001 and 2004 c 131 s 1 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) Unrestricted access to and from public highways has resulted in congestion and peril for the traveler. It has caused undue slowing of all traffic in many areas. The investment of the public in highway facilities has been impaired and highway facilities costing vast sums of money will have to be relocated and reconstructed.

(2) ((~~Personal wireless service~~)) Broadband, which includes a range of high-speed transmission technologies, including fiber optic lines and personal wireless service facilities, is a critical part of the state's infrastructure. The rapid deployment of ((~~personal wireless service~~)) broadband facilities is critical to ensure public safety, network access, quality of service, and rural economic development.

(3) It is, therefore, the declared policy of this state to limit access to the highway facilities of this state in the interest of highway safety and for the preservation of the investment of the public in such facilities, and to ((~~assure~~)) ensure that the use of rights-of-way of limited access facilities accommodate the deployment of ((~~personal wireless service~~)) broadband facilities consistent with these interests. In furtherance of this policy, the department is directed to adopt and maintain an agency policy that requires the department to proactively provide broadband facility owners with information about planned limited access highway projects to enable collaboration between broadband facility owners and the department to identify opportunities for the installation of broadband facilities during the appropriate phase of these projects when such opportunities exist. Coordination between the department and broadband facilities under this section must comply with applicable state and federal law including, but not limited to, chapter 47.44 RCW and RCW 47.04.045.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose in the omnibus transportation appropriations act, the joint transportation committee shall oversee a consultant study to recommend:

(a) An effective department of transportation strategy, and specific limited access highway corridors, that could be used to address missing fiber connections and inadequate broadband service in parts of the state underserved by broadband facilities;

(b) The most promising planning and financing tools that could be used by the department of transportation to provide the state with greater ability to install conduit in anticipation of future broadband fiber occupancy by others;

(c) Opportunities for mutually beneficial partnerships between the department of transportation and broadband service providers that could provide broadband services for transportation purposes such as intelligent transportation systems, cooperative automated transportation/autonomous vehicles, transportation demand management, and highway maintenance activities; and

(d) Strategies for the mitigation of potential safety, operations, and preservation impacts to transportation related to the recommendations made in (a) through (c) of this subsection.

(2) The study must also include an examination of any state and federal laws and regulations that could prevent or limit the implementation of these recommendations, as well as recommendations for modifications to the applicable state laws and regulations.

(3) The joint transportation committee shall consult with the department of transportation, the Washington statewide broadband office, and other state agencies and local jurisdictions, as necessary, during development of the study's recommendations to ensure the relevance and applicability of the recommendations to the state.

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