

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 6636

As Reported By House Committee On:

Transportation

Title: An act relating to dedication of roadside safety rest areas.

Brief Description: Authorizing designation of rest areas as POW/MIA memorials.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Senators Bauer, Oke, Owen and Kohl).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Transportation: 2/15/96, 2/20/96 [DPA].

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass as amended. Signed by 25 members: Representatives K. Schmidt, Chairman; Benton, Vice Chairman; Mitchell, Vice Chairman; Skinner, Vice Chairman; R. Fisher, Ranking Minority Member; Hatfield, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Backlund; Blanton; Buck; Cairnes; Chopp; Elliot; Hankins; Horn; Johnson; McMahan; Ogden; Patterson; Quall; Robertson; Romero; D. Schmidt; Scott; Sterk and Tokuda.

Staff: Jennifer Joly (786-7305).

Background: The Washington State Department of Transportation operates 38 safety rest areas, 29 of which are located along interstate highways.

Last session the Legislature enacted legislation which expanded the adopt-a-highway program beyond traditional roadside litter pick-up activities. For example, the legislation allows private entities to finance activities such as planting vegetation and removing graffiti at safety rest areas.

In Illinois the Department of Transportation has instituted a program allowing memorial signs to be placed in its safety rest areas for prisoners of war (POWs) and those missing in action (MIAs).

Summary of Amended Bill: The Transportation Commission may designate interstate safety rest areas as locations for memorial signs to POWs and MIAs.

Nonprofit associations may have their names identified on memorial signs, provided they bear the cost of supplying and maintaining the signs.

Amended Bill Compared to Substitute Bill: The Transportation Commission is directed to adopt policies for the placement of memorial signs in interstate safety rest areas. The policies shall include, but are not limited to, guidelines for the size, location of, and inscriptions on memorial signs.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: Placement of memorial signs in safety rest areas to honor POWs/MIAs should be authorized to honor those soldiers who have made great sacrifices for our liberty. The 40 veteran service organizations in the state of Washington support this legislation.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Senator Al Bauer, prime sponsor; Larry Russ, Department of Transportation; Bill Hughes, Vancouver citizen; Francis Agnes, American Ex-POWs Coalition; Skip Dreps, Veterans Legislative Coalition; John Lee, Washington Department of Veterans' Affairs; and Glenn A. Galbreath, Northwest Paralyzed Veterans of America.