

SENATE BILL REPORT

ESSB 6061

As Passed Senate, April 16, 1997

Title: An act relating to transportation funding and appropriations.

Brief Description: Funding transportation.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Senators Prince, Haugen and Wood; by request of Governor Locke).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Transportation: 3/25/97, 4/15/97 [DPS, DNPS].
Passed Senate, 4/16/97, 30-19.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6061 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Prince, Chair; Wood, Vice Chair; Haugen, Heavey, Horn, Morton, Oke, Prentice and Rasmussen.

Minority Report: Do not pass substitute.

Signed by Senators Benton, Vice Chair; and Jacobsen.

Staff: Brad Lovaas (786-7307)

Background: Appropriation authority is required for the expenditure of state funds. State government operates on the basis of a fiscal biennium that begins on July 1 of each odd-numbered year.

Two-thirds of the moneys appropriated in the transportation budget are for capital programs, and one-third is for operating programs of the transportation agencies.

The motor vehicle fund is the primary funding source of transportation programs, providing for 45 percent, or \$1.4 billion, of transportation appropriations in the 1995-97 transportation budget.

The 1995-97 transportation budget totaled \$3.3 billion.

Summary of Bill: Two distinct sets of appropriations are provided: (1) current revenues to transportation agencies for the 1997-99 biennium (parts 1 through 4 and 6); and (2) supplemental appropriations to transportation agencies for the 1995-97 biennium (part 5).

1997-99 Current Law Appropriation (parts 1-4)

Department of Transportation. No funds are provided for new projects to expand highway capacity. Funding is provided for the completion of construction projects that are currently under construction.

\$30 million is added for highway (\$25 million) and bridge (\$5 million) preservation. Resurfacing existing highways to eliminate potholes and ruts is a critical safety factor.

\$6 million is added for highway maintenance for pavement striping, repairing of raised pavement reflectors and control of vegetation obstructions, and more emphasis on culvert cleaning and storm drainage systems. The snow and ice control program is continued at the current level.

\$5 million is provided for improved traffic operations, including coordinating signals, freeway ramp metering and additional school crosswalks. This helps make more efficient use of existing freeways and highways.

Washington State Patrol. Assumes the general fund will pay for Washington State Patrol general fund activities that the transportation budget assumed in the 1993 session, and redirects motor vehicle fund dollars to pay for 89 new WSP troopers.

Weigh station equipment on Interstate 5 and in Eastern Washington is repaired and upgraded to help reduce road damage caused by overweight vehicles.

Two capital projects (Yakima District office and the Microwave Migration from analog to digital) that were started in the 1995-97 biennium are completed, and funding is provided for maintenance of existing facilities. No new capital projects are started.

Department of Licensing. Funding is provided to cover increased costs of doing business. Examples include: increases in the price of film, increased inventory for plates and tabs, costs of implementing 1996 DUI legislation, mail and postage increases, GA motorpool increases, etc.

Funding has not been provided for the Licensing Application Migration Project (LAMP).

Funding is provided to finish and occupy capital facilities initiated in the 1995-97 biennium.

Other Agencies:

1. Traffic Safety Commission: Funded at current level.
2. Transportation Improvement Board: Approximately \$222 million provided for projects.
3. County Road Administration Board: Approximately \$88 million provided for projects.

4. Special Appropriations to the Governor: The amount of estimated tort claims is reduced according to the 1996 actuarial report
5. Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development: Funding continued for the six Washington State Gateway Visitor Information Centers.
6. Office of Financial Management: Funding continued for transportation management analyst to work with transportation agencies.
7. Board of Pilotage Commissioners: On-going funding provided at the 1995-97 level for the commission's pilotage account.
8. Utilities and Transportation Commission: Continued funding provided for the grade crossing protection account.
9. Marine Employees Commission: Funding continued for the Marine Employees Commission.
10. State Parks and Recreation Commission: On-going funding provided for roadway maintenance for snow removal and small roadway repairs.
11. Department of Agriculture: Funding continued for the Motor Fuel Quality Program.
12. Transportation Commission: Current service level operations of the commission provided.
13. Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee: \$514,000 is provided for a performance audit of the Department of Transportation.
14. Legislative Agencies: Continued funding provided for on-going operations at current service level.

1995-97 Supplemental Appropriations (part 5)

1. \$25.1 million of federal funding for floods (DOT).
2. \$4 million additional snow and ice funding (includes \$2 million that was placed in snow and ice reserve in 1996 supplemental budget) (DOT).
3. \$1.1 million of federal funding for railroad crossing projects (DOT).
4. \$700,000 of federal funding for metropolitan planning organizations (DOT).
5. \$500,000 of federal funding for King Street Station design work (DOT).
6. \$500,000 for additional ferry tort claim payments (DOT).
7. \$250,000 for manual processing of accident reports due to delay in implementing the CRASH project (DOL).

8. \$250,000 for Washington State's share of Wahkiakum ferry costs (DOT).

Appropriation: \$3.178 billion.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

House Amendment(s): Department of Transportation. No funds provided for new projects to expand highway capacity. Funding is provided for the completion of construction projects that are currently underway.

Fully funds the highway preservation program.

Provides funding for acquisition of the second passenger-only vessel and the fourth Jumbo Mark II vessel, as requested by the Transportation Commission.

Cuts several operational programs pending the results of the LTC audit of the department, including capital facilities, ferry operations, maintenance, traffic operations, and planning and research.

Provides \$42.7 million for intercity passenger rail to complete acquisition of the two Talgo trainsets, add one additional round trip between Seattle and Portland, and begin design and preliminary engineering on King Street Station.

Replaces the loss of federal rail assistance funds with the addition of \$750,000 from the High Capacity Transportation Account.

Provides \$1.0 million for the Agency Coordinating Council on Transportation to better integrate special needs services and transit services (HB 2166).

Funds the Rural Mobility Program at \$1.5 million.

Provides \$500,000 for continuation of Freight Mobility Advisory Committee (FMAC) activities.

Washington State Patrol. Provides funding for 8 new investigators to assist line troopers in vehicle license fraud, auto theft, collision investigation and felony follow-up investigation.

Adds 54 new COPS troopers during the biennium to improve the availability and response level for motorist assistance and traffic enforcement.

Upgrades the weigh scale at the SeaTac weigh station and moves the SeaTac scale to the Othello weigh station.

Completes the Microwave Migration Phase 2 (existing sites) started in the 1995-97 biennium and provides funding for maintenance of existing facilities. No new capital projects are funded.

Provides funding for the year 2000 data processing conversion.

Addresses a transfer of the funding for General Fund activities that were temporarily being funded by transportation funds during the 1993-95 and 1995-97 biennia.

Utilizes the General Fund transfer to provide pay increases to commissioned officers, commercial vehicle enforcement officers, and communication officers to bring the trooper pay levels up to the 50th percentile based on the 1997 salary survey. The pay increase is 6 percent on July 1, 1997, which includes the omnibus budget pay increase of 3 percent, and an additional 6 percent pay increase on July 1, 1998.

Department of Licensing. Funding is provided to cover the increased costs of doing business. Examples include: increase in the price of film, increased costs for plates and tabs, costs of implementing 1996 drivers under the influence of alcohol legislation, mail and postage increases, Department of General Administration motorpool cost increases, etc.

Funding is provided for the first year of the biennium only, to finish development and operate the drivers phase of the Licensing Application Migration Project (LAMP).

Funding is provided to complete and occupy three capital facilities projects in Vancouver, Union Gap and Lacey initiated in the 95-97 biennium. Two previously authorized projects, Wenatchee and West Spokane are not funded. No new capital projects are started.

Other Agencies:

Legislative Transportation Committee: Funding is provided for TIBCRA BTRANS AID Consolidation; DOL performance audit; MVET Collection Evaluation; and, FMAC study in eastern and southeastern Washington.

Traffic Safety Commission, Board of Pilotage Commissioners, Utilities and Transportation Commission, Marine Employees Commission, Transportation Commission and Legislative Agencies, except LTC, are all funded at current level.

Transportation Improvement Board: Provides approximately \$ 222 million for projects.

County Road Administration Board: Provides approximately \$ 88 million for projects.

Special Appropriations to the Governor: Reduces the amount of estimated tort claims according to the 1996 actuarial report.