

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6456

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Transportation, February 24, 1998

Title: An act relating to transportation funding and appropriations.

Brief Description: Making supplemental transportation appropriations.

Sponsors: Senators Prince, Haugen, Wood, Kline and Horn; by request of Governor Locke.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Transportation: 2/23/98, 2/24/98 [DPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6456 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Prince, Chair; Benton, Vice Chair; Wood, Vice Chair; Goings, Haugen, Heavey, Horn, Jacobsen, Morton, Oke, Patterson, Prentice, Rasmussen and Sellar.

Staff: Brad Lovaas (786-7307)

Background: The transportation budget provides appropriations to the major transportation agencies « the Department of Transportation, the Washington State Patrol, the Department of Licensing, the Transportation Improvement Board, and the County Road Administration Board. It also provides appropriations to many smaller transportation agencies and appropriates transportation funds and accounts to general government agencies.

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

The motor vehicle fund is the primary funding source of transportation programs, providing for 43 percent, or \$1.3 billion, of transportation appropriations in the 1997-99 transportation budget.

The 1995-97 transportation budget totaled \$3.3 billion. The 1997-99 transportation budget totals \$2.9 billion.

Summary of Substitute Bill: Supplemental appropriations are made to transportation agencies for the 1997-99 biennium. The total 1997-99 supplemental budget is \$97.3 million.

1997-99 Supplemental Budget

WSDOT Current Law Recommendations

- Funds \$50 million list of statewide Freight Mobility, Economic Development and Partnership Projects (excluding federal demo match) “ Revised total project cost of \$40 million - Uses funds vetoed by Governor last session.
- Uses federal dollars and the general fund transfer to finance \$98 million of additional projects addressing economic development, safety, and congestion.
- Provides \$4 million for Special Category C– projects (SR 18 Construction); assumes no additional bonding authority.
- Appropriates \$12 million for Year 2000 Conversion effort.
- Funds 19 items related to Marine Operating Program.
Combination of 3 item types: 1) one-year funding pending audits; 2) not approved in 97 because of audits, and 3) new items. Takes \$0.9 million in savings from lower fuel costs and late delivery of new Jumbo.
- \$3.5 million provided for Ferry Terminal Preservation projects.
- \$2.7 million is provided for the CVSN Program transferred from WSP to WSDOT.
- Provides \$3.0 million for Commute Trip Reduction Program from High Capacity Transportation Account.
- \$4 million is provided from the high capacity transportation account for facility improvements to match the federal commitment to improve passenger rail service between Seattle and Vancouver, B.C.
- Reappropriates funding for Highway, Ferry, and Aviation programs.
- Requires WSDOT to conduct a program evaluation of the Public Private Initiatives program (\$100,000) within current appropriation authority.
- Total request is for \$111.1 million in transportation funds.

WSP Current Law Recommendations

- \$302,000 is provided for Medicare coverage for commissioned officers hired prior to 1986 if the majority of the officers for the coverage.
- \$1,580,000 is provided for transportation’s share of the Washington State Patrol data center shortfall and transition costs to the Department of Information services.
- \$461,000 funds the Washington State Patrol’s portion of the fuel tax enforcement program.
- \$26,000 is provided for fiscal year 1999 VIN lane costs.
- \$1 million in reversions and savings.

- General fund activities transferred back to the general fund that occurred in 1993-95 biennium. The general fund is to assume a portion of the Technical Services and Communications Division of the WSP.
- The general fund is assuming \$10.1 million in general fund activities.
- Total supplemental budget is \$1.37 million in transportation funds, excluding the general fund transfer.

DOL Current Law Recommendation

- \$339,000 for Year 2000 conversion effort.
- \$2.8 million to replace the Wang Imaging system instead of spending \$1.2 million to bring an obsolete system into Year 2000 compliance.
- \$2.6 million to implement the recommendations of the Business and Technology Assessment Project (BTAP)
- \$331,000 and 2.2 FTE's for additional staffing in Vancouver and Yakima.
- \$4.4 million in reversions and savings.
- Total supplemental budget is \$2.45 million in transportation funds.

General Government Agencies

- \$250,000 for the Traffic Safety Commission to advertise the changes in DUI statutes contained in SSB 6293.
- \$10,000 of the current appropriation to the Department of Agriculture is to be used for laboratory analysis of diesel fuel samples to detect illegally-blended diesel fuel.
- The Office of Financial Management, the Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development, and State Parks are transferred to the general fund.

Legislative Transportation Committee

- \$750,000 is for the creation of a special panel to conduct an analysis of existing transportation funding mechanisms and to propose solutions for long-term financing of transportation.
- \$30,000 is for a cost/ benefit evaluation of public vanpool expenditures.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The following amendments were made to the original bill:

- Language is added to include, in addition to the Legislative Transportation Committee (LTC), the Governor or his designee to work on convening a special panel to evaluate long-term transportation funding needs.
- Reference to "transportation policy makers" on the long-term transportation funding panel is replaced with "the state, cities, counties" to provide language clarity.
- LTC is directed to conduct a study of the financing of vanpools.
- Additional funding is provided for various highway improvement projects.
- Reference to funding for a fourth Jumbo Mark II ferry and legislation (HB 2108) authorizing DOT to procure the vessel is removed.
- \$4 million is provided for improvements to rail facilities between Seattle and Bellingham as a state commitment to match funds provided by Amtrak and other parties.
- A transfer from the highway bond retirement account to the transportation improvement board bond retirement account is authorized.
- The obligation of the small city account for reimbursement of previous bond issues in the urban arterial trust account is removed.
- DOT is required to report to LTC regarding the results of efficiency measure implementation.
- OFM, DCTED, State Parks, and various WSP activities currently funded with transportation funds is transferred to the general fund.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: This bill will provide the funding necessary to continue current transportation programs and enable transportation agencies to continue delivering the current level of service.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: Chief Annette Sandberg, Washington State Patrol; Sid Morrison, Secretary, Department of Transportation; Evelyn Yenson, Director, Department of Licensing.