

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5936

As of March 3, 1999

Title: An act relating to creation of the trip reduction program.

Brief Description: Creating the trip reduction program.

Sponsors: Senators Gardner, Winsley, Haugen, Patterson and Goings.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Transportation: 3/3/99.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Staff: Jeff Doyle (786-7322)

Background: Major employers (100 or more employees) in the state's nine largest counties are currently required to implement commute trip reduction programs to reduce the number of their employees traveling by single-occupant vehicles to their work sites.

To assist with implementation of the commute trip reduction program, the Department of Transportation (DOT) assists local governments and employers with financial and technical assistance. This program was assumed by the department when the State Energy Office was dissolved. This program is funded at approximately \$7 million per biennium, largely with Air Pollution Control Account funds. In 1998, the Legislature appropriated an additional \$2.5 million for tax credits, vanpool acquisition, and employer technical support.

Currently no formal program or account exists to provide funds for the Department of Transportation to carry out transportation demand management strategies on a corridor-wide basis.

The Transportation Improvement Board (TIB) administers several grant programs. Many of these grants can be used to improve pedestrian and bicycle facilities, particularly when improvements are part of ongoing road maintenance, construction or repair. The TIB currently administers a Pedestrian Facilities Program. The program funds separate pedestrian facility projects that serve as linkages to a pedestrian corridor or network. These programs are at the discretion of the TIB and are not legislatively mandated.

There currently is no bicycle program mandated in statute.

Summary of Bill: A new trip reduction program is created within the TIB. The program has many similarities to the existing commute trip reduction program administered by DOT. Incentive grants are provided to both public and private entities for developing innovative projects and programs that reduce the trips made by single-occupancy vehicles. Examples of such programs include: ride-matching services, subsidies for vanpools and carpools, proximate commuting, etc.

A new trip reduction account is created in the transportation fund for the purpose of providing a dedicated account for the program.

A new state transportation corridor transportation demand management incentive program is created. The DOT administers a program that provides grants to their regional offices on a competitive basis. The grants are awarded for programs that encourage corridor demand management strategies on existing state transportation facilities. A dedicated account is created within the transportation fund for this program.

Two new programs are created to be administered by the TIB. A pedestrian safety and access program is created for the purpose of providing grants to cities, counties, and other political subdivisions of the state for constructing, maintaining, or promoting pedestrian safety and facilities. A dedicated account is created in the transportation fund to carry out the purposes of this program. A bicycle facilities program is created for the purpose of providing grants to cities, counties, and other political subdivisions of the state for constructing, maintaining, or promoting bicycle facilities and programs. The programs must contribute to bicycle safety, reduce congestion, or improve bicycle facilities.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not available.

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