

Transportation Committee

HB 1675

Brief Description: *Improving traffic chokepoints.*

Sponsors: *Representatives Fisher, Mitchell, Poulsen and Kagi; by request of The Blue Ribbon Commission on Transportation.*

Brief Summary of Bill

- *The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) is directed to focus on improving the worst traffic chokepoints in the state system when developing its six-year investment plan.*
- *Priority programming for transportation improvements must be based on traffic congestion, location within a heavily traveled corridor, synchronization with other potential transportation projects, and benefit-cost analysis to determine the value of the proposed project.*

Hearing Date: *2/20/01*

Staff: *Paul Neal (786-7315).*

Background:

The Legislature and the Governor formed the Blue Ribbon Commission on Transportation in 1998 to assess the local, regional, and state transportation system; ensure that current and future money is spent wisely; make the system more accountable and predictable; and prepare a 20-year plan for funding and investing in the transportation system. The commission consisted of 46 members representing business, labor, agriculture, tribes, government, ports, shipping, trucking, transit, rail, environmental interests, and the general public.

The commission made 18 recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature. Recommendation #5 outlined several ways to invest in maintenance, preservation, and improvement of the entire transportation system so that transportation benchmarks can be

achieved. The commission recommended that the Legislature make cost-effective system expansions in heavily traveled corridors. The commission recommended looking to congestion, using a benefit-cost analysis in making investments, and using a corridor approach in transportation planning and investing.

Summary of Bill:

Funding for transportation improvements should be allocated to the worst traffic chokepoints in the state. Priority programming for transportation improvements must be based on traffic congestion, location within a heavily traveled corridor, synchronization with other potential transportation projects, and benefit-cost analysis to determine the value of the proposed project.

The Transportation Commission or its successor must report the results of its priority programming to the Legislature by October 31, 2001.

Appropriation: *None.*

Fiscal Note: *Available.*

Effective Date: *The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect on July 1, 2001.*