

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2159

As Reported by House Committee On:
Transportation

Title: An act relating to maintaining and preserving transportation facilities and assets.

Brief Description: Maintaining and preserving transportation facilities and assets.

Sponsors: Representatives Mitchell, Fisher and Hankins.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Transportation: 2/26/01, 3/6/01 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) is directed to use effective highway maintenance and preservation strategies including a pavement management system, a maintenance element in the state highway system plan, and lowest lifecycle cost preservation methodologies.
- The WSDOT is directed to: (1) use cost benefit analysis to guide investments; (2) phase in the development of analytic tools to use a common methodology to measure costs and benefits for all transportation modes subject to appropriation; and (3) use the most cost-effective pavement surfaces based upon durability.
- The WSDOT's priority programming for its improvement program must be based primarily upon: (1) addressing traffic congestion, delay and accidents; (2) locating projects within heavily traveled corridors; (3) synchronization with other projects and modes; and (4) cost-benefit analysis.
- The WSDOT must adopt a joint trenching policy for state highways setting standards for restoration of cut pavement and requiring compensation for lost pavement life.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 29 members: Representatives Fisher, Democratic Co-Chair; Mitchell,

Republican Co-Chair; Cooper, Democratic Vice Chair; Ericksen, Republican Vice Chair; Hankins, Republican Vice Chair; Lovick, Democratic Vice Chair; Ahern, Anderson, Armstrong, G. Chandler, Edmonds, Haigh, Hatfield, Hurst, Jackley, Jarrett, Marine, Morell, Murray, Ogden, Reardon, Rockefeller, Romero, Schindler, Simpson, Skinner, Sump, Wood and Woods.

Staff: Paul Neal (786-7315).

Background:

The Legislature and the Governor formed the Blue Ribbon Commission on Transportation (commission) 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 specifically recommended using:

- Maintenance management systems and pavement management systems;
- lowest lifecycle cost principles as a basis for preservation investments;
- cost-benefit analysis and travel demand modeling tools;
- the most cost-effective pavement surfaces based on durability as a way to invest in preservation of the transportation system;
- 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; and
- a joint trenching policy that reduces the need to cut multiple utility trenches in state highways.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

Substitute House Bill 2159 contains modified provisions from other bills based upon commission recommendations heard by the Transportation Committee. The original bills dealt with both state and local government transportation management issues. Substitute House Bill 2159 is limited to management of state highways and state rail systems. The provisions and the original source bill are identified below.

HB 1668: The WSDOT must use a pavement management system using lowest lifecycle cost methodology. The state highway system plan must include a maintenance element designed to meet the benchmarks set by the commission. State ferry and rail programs must have a capital preservation plan using lowest lifecycle cost methodologies.

HB 1669: The WSDOT must phase in the development of demand modeling tools that provide a common methodology to measure costs and benefits for all modes subject to legislative appropriation. Project prioritization must be based upon cost-benefit analysis, where appropriate. The preservation program must use the most cost-effective pavement surfaces based upon durability.

HB 1675: Priority programming for the improvement program must be based primarily upon: (1) addressing traffic congestion, delay and accidents; (2) location within heavily traveled corridors; (3) synchronization with other projects and modes; and (4) use of cost-benefit analysis to determine project value.

HB 1671: The WSDOT is directed to develop joint trenching policies to encourage coordination of under-roadway access between multiple utilities and/or municipalities. Persons performing utility trenching on a state highway are responsible for expenses of restoration and inspection, financial impact of not completing trenching within the permit period, and compensating for loss of useful pavement life. A city with trenching jurisdiction over a state highway running through its boundaries must require any trenching it permits to meet restoration standards adopted by the WSDOT.

The Transportation Commission is directed to report back to the Legislature by December 1, 2001 regarding: (1) use of cost-benefit analysis in priority programming; and 2) evaluation of lifecycle cost methodologies.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The WSDOT is directed to phase in the development of modeling software subject to legislative appropriation. Restoration of trenching work on state highways must meet or exceed the WSDOT requirements.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on March 7, 2001.

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

Testimony For: Passage of the bill will assist the WSDOT in improving the maintenance and preservation of state highways.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Rick Smith, Department of Transportation.