

FINAL BILL REPORT

EHB 1617

C 381 L 93
Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Planning high-speed ground transportation.

By Representatives R. Fisher, Chandler, Schmidt, Eide, Johanson, J. Kohl, Kremen, Cothorn, Jacobsen, Brough, Pruitt, Thomas, R. Meyers, Miller, Shin, Karahalios, Locke, Finkbeiner, Ogden, Quall, Orr, Wineberry, Veloria, Wood, H. Myers, L. Johnson and Anderson.

House Committee on Transportation
Senate Committee on Transportation

Background: The 1991 Legislature directed that a study be undertaken to evaluate the feasibility of a high speed ground transportation system in Washington State capable of providing service at speeds of at least 150 miles per hour. The study was to address the economic feasibility of developing such a system, as well as land use and economic development impacts, the necessary institutional structure to develop such a system, and system financing.

The study was guided by a 23-member steering committee and staffed by the Department of Transportation and by consultants.

The study concluded in an October 1992 report that a high speed rail system was feasible in Washington. The report recognized that a high speed system connecting Vancouver, B.C. and Portland, Oregon, and Seattle and Spokane, required a significant resource commitment in the range of \$14 billion to \$20 billion, in 1992 dollars. Thus, the report recommended incremental upgrading of existing rail service while the long range high speed rail passenger plan is developed.

Summary: A program to begin implementation of a high speed ground transportation system in Washington is established. The program is to be implemented by the Department of Transportation in cooperation with the Utilities and Transportation Commission and affected cities and counties. The department is directed to incrementally upgrade existing rail passenger services through depot improvements, grade crossing and track improvements, and service enhancements contracted with Amtrak. Local support for intercity rail service is encouraged, as are intermodal considerations.

The department is to develop an incremental and a long range rail passenger plan through the conduct of studies to refine ridership estimates, corridor location and environmental analyses; station location assessments, coordination with state air transportation policy, and coordination with Oregon and British Columbia.

Votes on Final Passage:

House	90	5	
Senate	40	2	(Senate amended)
House	92	5	(House concurred)

Effective: July 1, 1993