

SENATE BILL REPORT

ESSB 6701

As Passed Senate, February 13, 1996

Title: An act relating to intercity transportation.

Brief Description: Improving public transportation connections.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Senators Fraser and Wood).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Transportation: 2/5/96, 2/6/96 [DPS].
Passed Senate, 2/13/96, 49-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6701 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Owen, Chair; Heavey, Vice Chair; Goings, Oke, Prentice, Prince, Rasmussen, Schow, Sellar, Thibaudeau and Wood.

Staff: Gene Baxstrom (786-7303)

Background: North/south travel between locations in Snohomish, King, Pierce and Thurston counties is growing. Each of these counties is served by many providers of public conveyance. Yet, in many instances, connecting between providers is difficult, in part because of jurisdictional boundaries and because of limited information regarding connections.

Local public transit jurisdictions have exclusive authority within their boundaries for providing public transit services. Over the past several years, many of these agencies have taken steps to provide connections with adjoining jurisdictions.

Summary of Bill: A grant process is established to enhance information available regarding public conveyance among King, Pierce, Snohomish and Thurston counties along corridors of state interest. The Transportation Improvement Board is to develop, in consultation with the Department of Transportation, a grant process for moneys in the Intercity Passenger Account, which is established to help fund implementation of this activity.

Transit agencies in the King, Pierce, Snohomish and Thurston counties are directed to prepare and distribute by July 1, 1997, a brochure providing scheduling information to address methods of travel among the four counties by public conveyance. Conveyances are to include transit, ferries, intercity busses and trains, and airporter services.

The exclusive operating authority for cities, public transportation benefit areas, and metropolitan municipal corporations in King, Pierce, Snohomish and Thurston counties is

modified to permit other transit agencies to operate within their jurisdiction under certain conditions. These conditions are that the service cross at least one boundary between transit jurisdictions in the area along regional bus routes and that the routes emanate or terminate within the other transit agencies' boundaries. The service may include stops to embark or disembark passengers. Similarly, the exclusive operating authority for the Regional Transit Authority is modified to permit transit agencies from outside the authority boundaries to operate within its boundaries. These changes take effect July 1, 1997; however, legislative intent is set forth indicating that these changes will be delayed if transit agencies within the four county area develop policies and joint operating agreements to facilitate travel within the area.

The Department of Transportation, in conjunction with the Department of General Administration and other appropriate jurisdictions, is to evaluate the feasibility of establishing a pilot project to provide shuttle services connecting Olympia with major state employment centers in the central Puget Sound region.

A null and void clause provides that if this act is not funded in the 1996 supplemental appropriations act, it is null and void.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available on original bill.

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

Testimony For: Improved linkages and coordination of transit services is important within the region and this bill aids that effort. The bill works to eliminate barriers among jurisdictions in the region.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: Senator Fraser, prime sponsor; Dan Snow, WA State Transit Assn.; Mike Harber, Thurston Co. ITT; Jackie White, Community Transit; Ian McGowan, Pierce Transit; Lois Anderson, WSDOT; Cherie Tessier, People First of WA.