

VETO MESSAGE ON HB 2474-S

March 31, 2004

To the Honorable Speaker and Members,
The House of Representatives of the State of Washington

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am returning herewith, without my approval as to sections 216; 224(5); 225(3); 302(4)(b); 305(7); and 505, Engrossed Substitute House Bill No. 2474 entitled:

"AN ACT Relating to transportation funding and appropriations;"

Section 216, page 13, Department of Transportation " Economic Partnerships

This section would have provided \$400,000 for a traffic study and an economic analysis related to constructing a connection between State Route 504 and Forest Service Road 99. In 2001, the Department of Transportation completed a study on this project, and it does not consider additional study of the project to be a high priority. While there may be rural economic development benefits to such a road connection, existing state transportation funding remains quite limited and should be reserved for higher priority projects.

Section 224(5), page 25, Department of Transportation " Rail

This section would have directed the Department to perform an origin and destination study by July 1, 2004. No funding was appropriated for this purpose. Nonetheless, the Department has indicated that it will look for opportunities to collect comparable data to achieve the goal of the study. As it does this, the Department should communicate to the Legislature by July 1, 2004 regarding currently available data, and other relevant information that supports the rationale for the new passenger train cost sharing agreement.

Section 225(3), page 25, Department of Transportation " Local Programs

This section would have required that the state historic preservation officer be appointed to a committee appointed by the Governor. This is an unnecessary intrusion into executive authority. Notwithstanding this, it is anticipated that the state historic preservation officer will be included in a steering committee where historic preservation issues will be considered.

Section 302(4)(b), page 28, Department of Transportation " Improvements

This section would have provided \$100,000 to the Department to analyze the costs and benefits of having high-occupancy lanes in the right lane, instead of the left lane. The Department has analyzed the placement of the high-occupancy lanes, and another study is unnecessary.

Section 305(7), page 41, Department of Transportation “ Rail

This section would have directed the Department to provide the Legislature and the Office of Financial Management (OFM) with a business plan for purchasing the Palouse River and Coulee City Railroad. Further, it would have directed that the purchase may not be executed until OFM has approved the plan. No additional funding was provided for this purpose. In addition, the Department, which has expertise in rail operations and financial management, has already reviewed the financial issues related to purchasing this railroad, so another study is unnecessary.

Section 505, page 52

This section referenced two bills, Substitute Senate Bill No. 6680 and Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill No. 6701, that were not approved during the 2004 legislative session. Therefore, I have vetoed this section.

For these reasons, I have vetoed sections 216; 224(5); 225(3); 302(4)(b); 305(7); and 505 of Engrossed Substitute House Bill No. 2474.

With the exception of sections 216; 224(5); 225(3); 302(4)(b); 305(7); and 505, Engrossed Substitute House Bill No. 2474 is approved.

Respectfully submitted,
Gary Locke
Governor