

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 5775

As Reported by House Committee On: Transportation

Title: An act relating to the creation of a small city or town street improvement program.

Brief Description: Authorizing the creation of a small city or town street and sidewalk improvement program.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Senator Mulliken).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Transportation: 3/30/05, 3/31/05 [DP].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Establishes a small city pavement and sidewalk grant program to be administered by the Transportation Improvement Board.
- Establishes a special account for this program, funded by legislative appropriations.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 26 members: Representatives Murray, Chair; Wallace, Vice Chair; Woods, Ranking Minority Member; Appleton, Buck, Campbell, Curtis, Dickerson, Ericksen, Flannigan, Hankins, Hudgins, Jarrett, Kilmer, Lovick, Morris, Nixon, Rodne, Schindler, Sells, Shabro, Simpson, B. Sullivan, Takko, Upthegrove and Wood.

Staff: Gene Baxstrom (786-7303).

Background:

The 1999-2001 biennial transportation budget provided \$5 million to fund a grant program for small city pavement preservation through the Department of Transportation's Local Program. Competitive grants were made available to cities or towns with a population of 2,500 or less who agreed to adopt a pavement management system. Grants made under the program averaged \$50,000 to \$70,000 per project and were exhausted by 2003.

Summary of Bill:

The Small City Pavement and Sidewalk Account (Account) is created in the State Treasury. State funds appropriated from the Account must be used for small city pavement or sidewalk projects selected by the Transportation Improvement Board. Eligibility for funds is restricted to cities and towns with both a population of less than 5,000 and, depending on the project, a pavement management system or proposed sidewalk improvement that meets certain criteria. The Account will retain its own interest income.

The bill contains a null and void clause if funding is not provided by June 30, 2005.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect July 1, 2005, except section 5, relating to a section of law providing certain changes to accounts in the State Treasury, which takes effect July 1, 2006. However, the bill is null and void unless funded in the budget.

Testimony For: When this program was funded in the 1999-01 biennium, it provided an important source of funds for small towns that could actually restore their "main street." Otherwise, fuel tax distributions never provided enough money to do a project. This will also allow a small city to partner and combine projects with other jurisdictions. Roughly 180 small towns and cities could benefit from this program and it is a high priority to cities and to the Transportation Improvement Board.

Testimony Against: None.

Persons Testifying: Steve Gorcester, Transportation Improvement Board; and Ashley Probart, Association of Washington Cities.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.