

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5846

As of February 26, 2013

Title: An act relating to a toll facility on Interstate 90 west of Interstate 405.

Brief Description: Requiring the evaluation of options to mitigate the effect of tolling Interstate 90 west of Interstate 405 on certain residents.

Sponsors: Senators Litzow and Tom.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Transportation: 2/26/13.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Staff: Kim Johnson (786-7472)

Background: In 2008, the Legislature directed the Department of Transportation (WSDOT) to work with the Federal Highways Administration (FHWA) to determine the necessary steps to receive federal permission to toll the Interstate 90 floating bridge (I-90). In 2012, with ESHB 2190, the Legislature directed WSDOT to complete a comprehensive environmental review of tolling I-90 between Interstate 5 (I-5) and Interstate 405 (I-405) for the purposes of both managing traffic and providing funding for construction of the unfunded State Route 520 from I-5 to Medina project. The environmental review must include significant outreach to potentially affected communities.

WSDOT is conducting an Environmental Assessment (EA) of tolling on I-90 east of Seattle. WSDOT and FHWA have determined that the EA will include a review of pricing, fairness, traffic, and economics. The public scoping comment period of the EA closed on February 22. WSDOT will publish a draft EA and hold a public hearing in November.

Summary of Bill: As part of any ongoing or future study of tolling I-90 west of I-405, WSDOT must explore and evaluate options to mitigate the effect of tolling on affected residents.

Affected residents are defined as people who must use a portion of I-90 west of I-405 upon which tolling is considered in order to access necessary medical services, such as a hospital.

WSDOT must consider the following mitigation options:

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

- Allow all Washington residents to traverse a portion of the tolled section of I-90 without paying a toll. Washington residents may choose to forgo the toll on the portion of I-90 that is between easternmost landing west of Mercer Island and the westernmost landing on Mercer island; or the portion of I-90 between the westernmost landing east of Mercer Island and the easternmost landing on Mercer Island.
- Assess a toll only when a driver traverses, in either direction, the entire portion of I-90 between the easternmost landing west of Mercer Island and the westernmost landing east of Mercer Island.
- Allow affected residents to choose one portion of the tolled section of I-90 that they may travel on without paying the toll. Affected residents' choices of travel without paying a toll on portions of I-90 for this option are further delineated.

WSDOT may also consider any alternative mitigation options that conform to the purpose of this section.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 22, 2013.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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