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## Transportation Committee

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### SB 6180

**Brief Description:** Creating a disadvantaged business enterprise advisory committee within the transportation commission.

**Sponsors:** Senators King, Schoesler and Hasegawa.

#### Brief Summary of Bill

- Creates a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Advisory Committee within the Washington State Transportation Commission (WSTC) with the purpose of advising the WSTC on issues and concerns from the DBE community and increasing the level of accountability and transparency regarding DBE activities.

**Hearing Date:** 2/23/16

**Staff:** Alyssa Ball (786-7140).

#### Background:

As a condition of receiving federal highway funding, the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) must participate in the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) program. Generally, the DBE program provides an opportunity for firms owned and operated by disadvantaged individuals to work on federally funded project contracts and procurements. Disadvantaged individuals under the program are defined in federal law as individuals who are both socially and economically disadvantaged. The WSDOT manages the DBE program through its Office of Equal Opportunity, providing applicable services to businesses granted DBE certification by the Office of Minority and Women's Business Enterprises (OMWBE), a separate state agency. The WSDOT formed an on-going, internal DBE advisory group in 2011, which is comprised of community and trade based organizations and stakeholders.

In 2015 the Legislature provided ongoing funding for a dedicated employee at the WSDOT to provide "outreach to increase the pool of disadvantaged businesses available for department contracts." Additionally, the Legislature directed the Joint Transportation Committee to "study

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the issues surrounding minority and women-owned business contracting related to the transportation sector."

**Summary of Bill:**

The Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Advisory Committee (Committee) is created within the Washington State Transportation Commission (WSTC) to advise the WSTC on issues and concerns from the DBE community and to increase the level of accountability and transparency regarding DBE activities on both state and federal projects. The Committee must, among other things, issue a report with recommendations to the transportation committees of the Legislature by December 31, 2016, and annually thereafter. Specified relevant agencies must assist the Committee with its work.

The Committee must consist of 15 members, appointed jointly by the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President of the Senate, to be comprised of legislators and representatives of various agencies reflecting the DBE community. The Committee must meet at least two times in the current fiscal biennium and four times each fiscal biennium thereafter or as needed.

**Appropriation:** The sum of \$100,000.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.