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**HOUSE BILL 1222**

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**State of Washington 65th Legislature 2017 Regular Session**

**By** Representatives Pike, Tarleton, Orcutt, Shea, Rodne, Gregerson, and McBride

AN ACT Relating to the creation of a bistate bridge project legislative work group; and adding a new section to chapter 47.01 RCW.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 47.01 RCW to read as follows:

(1)(a) The legislature finds that both Washington and Oregon recognize the need for improving the capacity of Interstate 5 adjacent to and over the Columbia river, in addition to the development of new regional corridors, and that the legislatures of each state need basic oversight of the process. The legislature recognizes that the development of bistate bridge projects takes years of hard work and difficult decisions and that to achieve development of successful bistate bridge projects it must be pursued in a manner that will build and maintain bistate trust and positive working relationships to ensure economic growth and productivity in the entire region before reaching a federal record of decision. The legislature also recognizes that in-area legislators will be called upon to seek funding of any projects developed and, therefore, must be involved in the development of the projects from the beginning.

(b) The legislature further finds that to accomplish the findings in (a) of this subsection it is necessary to form a bistate, bipartisan bridge project legislative work group. Although the primary purpose of this facilitated effort is to establish a process that includes appropriate legislative involvement, it is not the intention to exclude stakeholders or existing experts or useful work products already established. The work group will define and recommend the ongoing legislative role in moving forward with bistate bridge projects and report that recommendation to the legislature for any required action.

(2) The bistate bridge project legislative work group is created and must facilitate strong public participation and input throughout the initial development stages to identify the most affordable, efficient project that improves freight mobility and safety, relieves traffic congestion, and meets the future needs of the region and the transportation corridor. The work group must also establish a ten-year plan, a twenty-five year plan, and a fifty-year plan.

(3) The bistate bridge project legislative work group must consist of eight bipartisan, bicameral members from each of the Washington and Oregon state legislatures who represent districts in the region, with a preference for members who serve on their respective transportation committees. The caucus leaders of the house and senate shall appoint an equal number of members to serve on the work group. Each legislative member must have an equal vote on matters considered by the work group. The work group must consider options for capacity, safety, sufficiency, public support, and cost-effectiveness in developing a solution to meet the needs of the corridor. To the extent feasible, the design must incorporate existing infrastructure and allow for its future maintenance and improvement.

(4) Local, regional, technical, legal, and other planning and transportation resources and stakeholders required for such a project may not be supplanted or precluded from appropriate involvement, but may not have any voting powers.

(5) By December 1, 2018, the bistate bridge project legislative work group must report its recommendations to the transportation committees of the legislature and provide annual updates on any projects to the legislature thereafter until the projects are completed.

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