

HOUSE BILL REPORT

EHB 1868

*As Passed House
March 15, 1991*

Title: An act relating to transportation.

Brief Description: Restructuring administration of the department of transportation.

Sponsor(s): Representatives Anderson, Ferguson, Cantwell, G. Fisher, Pruitt, Wineberry, Phillips and Hine.

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
State Government, March 6, 1991, DP;
Passed House, March 15, 1991, 55-44.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
STATE GOVERNMENT**

Majority Report: *Do pass.* Signed by 6 members:
Representatives Anderson, Chair; Pruitt, Vice Chair;
R. Fisher; Grant; O'Brien; and Sheldon.

Minority Report: *Do not pass.* Signed by 4 members:
Representatives McLean, Ranking Minority Member; Bowman,
Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Chandler; and Moyer.

Staff: Linda May (786-7135).

Background: Under current law, the executive head of the Department of Transportation is the secretary of transportation. The secretary is appointed by the Transportation Commission. The secretary may be removed from office by the commission for cause. The authority of the secretary is subject to policy guidance from the commission.

Summary of Bill: The secretary of transportation is appointed by the governor, with the consent of the Senate. The secretary will hold office at the pleasure of the governor. The authority of the secretary is subject to policy guidance from both the commission and the governor.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: July 1, 1991.

Testimony For: None.

Testimony Against: Highways used to be proposed by legislation, with the potential for vote-trading. Under the current system, decisions to build highways are based on less political factors such as need. The Department of Transportation is insulated from politics under the current system. Good management does not necessarily follow from direct appointment. Department budgets and operations receive a tremendous amount of oversight now.

Witnesses: Duke Schaub, Association of General Contractors and the Washington Construction Industry Council (opposed).