

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2589

*As Reported By House Committee on:
Transportation*

Title: An act relating to scenic and recreational highways.

Brief Description: Revising scenic and recreational highway routes.

Sponsor(s): Representatives Fraser, R. Fisher, Betrozoff, Basich and Jacobsen.

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Transportation, February 10, 1992, DPS.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
TRANSPORTATION**

Majority Report: *The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass.* Signed by 26 members: Representatives R. Fisher, Chair; R. Meyers, Vice Chair; Betrozoff, Ranking Minority Member; Chandler, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Brough; Cantwell; Cooper; Day; G. Fisher; Forner; Haugen; Heavey; Horn; P. Johnson; R. Johnson; Jones; Kremen; Mitchell; Nelson; Orr; Prentice; Prince; Schmidt; Wilson; Wood; and Zellinsky.

Staff: Brian McMorrow (786-7304).

Background: In 1990 the Legislature directed the Department of Transportation (DOT) to develop a method for assessing the scenic, recreational and cultural characteristics of Washington state's highways, and to establish an appropriate threshold for the addition of highways to the scenic and recreational highways system. During the following session the Legislature directed the DOT to complete its assessment of the state highway system and to identify highways eligible for the program.

Currently, 1,773 miles of the state's 7000-mile highway system are included in the Scenic and Recreational Highways Program.

The Scenic Vistas Act of 1971, also known as the Highway Advertising Control Act, restricts the use of billboards along state highways.

Summary of Substitute Bill: The bill adds 1,360 miles of state highways to the scenic and recreational highways system. It removes 165 miles from the scenic and recreational highways system and places them under the control of the Scenic Vistas Act of 1971.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The Department of Transportation (DOT) is directed to remove billboards that are not allowed by statute from newly designated sections of the scenic and recreational highways system. The DOT has 10 years to fulfill this responsibility.

The department must attempt to obtain federal funds for further development of the Scenic and Recreational Highways Program. It must collaborate with other interested agencies and identify entire highway loops or similar tourist routes that could be developed to promote tourism, while protecting the aesthetic quality of the scenic and recreational highways system.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: Washington state scenic beauty attracts thousands of tourists each year. The Scenic and Recreational Highways Program makes certain that scenic vistas will be preserved.

Testimony Against: None.

Witnesses: Dennis Ingham, Department of Transportation; and Ralph Munro, Secretary of State.