

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 2281

AS REPORTED BY COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION, FEBRUARY 28, 1992

Brief Description: Modifying requirements for crew size on passenger trains.

SPONSORS: House Committee on Commerce & Labor (originally sponsored by Representatives Prentice, R. Fisher, Vance, Forner, Heavey, G. Fisher, Roland, Winsley, Franklin, Paris, May, Mitchell and Leonard)

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE & LABOR

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Patterson, Chairman; Nelson, Vice Chairman; von Reichbauer, Vice Chairman; Conner, Erwin, W. Hansen, Madsen, McMullen, Oke, Skratek, Snyder, and Vognild.

Staff: Jeff Doyle (786-7322)

Hearing Dates: February 28, 1992

BACKGROUND:

State law prohibits any railroad company operating as a common carrier to run a passenger, mail, or express train of four or more cars with a crew of less than five persons in specified job classes.

SUMMARY:

The provisions are deleted that require passenger, mail, or express trains of four or more cars to have a crew consisting of at least five persons. New provisions are added that prohibit state regulatory agencies from preventing passenger train staffing in accordance with applicable collective bargaining agreements or national settlements of train crew size. If there is no collective bargaining agreement or settlement, the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission may perform a safety review of a passenger train operating with less than two crew members. In those circumstances, the commission may order a train crew of two members.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: none requested

TESTIMONY FOR:

The regional transit plan for the Puget Sound area includes consideration of a commuter rail facility. However, there are numerous concerns that must be addressed first, including state law requirements for passenger train crews. New technology makes it possible to use fewer crew members than the law requires and still have a safe operation. This is an issue that should be worked out between management and labor. Safety issues will be reviewed before any agreement is reached on a commuter rail contract.

TESTIMONY AGAINST: None

TESTIFIED: PRO: Dale Greenwood, Burlington Northern Railroad; Carol Monohon, UTC; Tom Retterath, United Transportation Union; Dale Jeremiah, Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers; Kurt Laird, AMTRAK