

6148

Sponsor(s): Senators Jacobsen, Thibaudeau, Horn, Finkbeiner, Eide, Constantine, Patterson, McDonald, Prentice and Kohl-Welles

Brief Description: Creating the Puget Sound transportation commission.

SB 6148 - DIGEST

Finds that a single statewide board whose members are appointed by the governor and which is assisted by regional advisory committees can be more effective than separate local jurisdictions at planning and funding regional transportation improvement.

Declares that it is the policy of the state of Washington to enable the creation of a statewide board and regional committees to plan and fund regional transportation needs.

Requires the governor to designate urban congestion districts. The boundary lines of these districts must meet the criteria established in this chapter.

Provides that the commission, with the advice of the corridor advisory boards, shall designate transportation projects, exclusive of maintenance and preservation, that will be funded under this act.

Requires the commission to create a corridor advisory board for each urban congestion district designated by the governor.

Authorizes the commission to impose, within an urban congestion district, the following voter-approved local option funding sources:

(1) An excise tax of up to two dollars per month per employee on all employees located within the district, measured by the number of full-time equivalent employees. This tax may not be imposed within a county that is already imposing an excise tax under RCW 81.100.030 or within the jurisdiction that is already imposing an employee tax under RCW 81.104.150;

(2) A local option vehicle license fee of up to seventy-five dollars per vehicle;

(3) Tolls on road improvements;

(4) A local option motor vehicle fuel tax of up to six cents per gallon; and

(5) A local option commercial vehicle charge of up to one hundred fifty dollars per commercial vehicle.

Declares that no taxes may be imposed without a vote of the people within the boundaries of the district on a referendum.

Directs the commission to use as a guide the following benchmarks when choosing projects by selecting projects that move towards the following benchmarks:

(1) Traffic congestion on urban interstate highways does not exceed the national mean for interstate highways;

(2) Driver delay in metropolitan areas does not exceed the national mean for metropolitan areas;

(3) The number of traffic accidents on systems throughout the state continues to decline;

(4) Air quality is maintained at federally required levels;

(5) Freight mobility is accommodated within the transportation system; and

(6) Overall hours of travel delay per person in congested corridors are reduced to and maintained at reasonable levels.