
Transportation Committee

HB 2962

Brief Description: Allowing use of PPI bond proceeds for safety improvements.

Sponsors: Representatives McMahan, Mielke and Lantz.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Allows the use of bonds authorized for the Tacoma Narrow Bridge toll project to be used for safety improvements on State Route 16.

Hearing Date: 2/9/04

Staff: Gary Lebow (786-7304).

Background:

The financing for the Tacoma Narrows Bridge Project was authorized in 2002 through the use of state motor fuel tax bonds authorized by Referendum 49. The authority to proceed with the project, the ability to collect tolls and the requirement for repayment of the Motor Vehicle Account is established under Chapter 47.46 RCW, Public-Private Transportation Initiatives. The provisions of the statute state that bonds authorized for projects under that chapter be used for the financing and construction of the bridge and its approaches. The statutes also require that principal and interest payments on those bonds will be repaid to the Motor Vehicle Account through the collection of tolls on the bridge (RCW 47.46.140).

State Route 16, Burley-Ollala intersection is located approximately 10 miles west of the Narrows Bridge. The intersection is an at-grade crossing and has experienced many accidents including fatalities and serious injuries. Funding for an interchange and overpass has been planned through the 2003 Transportation Account. The proposed project is scheduled to be open to traffic in 2012. The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) has proposed an interim project to reduce accidents to be completed in the current biennium. In 1999, the intersection was designated a high accident location by the WSDOT and this portion of State Route 16 has been listed as a high accident corridor for four of the last six biennia.

Summary of Bill:

The uses of bonds authorized and not required for the Tacoma Narrows Bridge are expanded to include safety improvements within the same corridor and on the same route as the bridge. This might allow the interchange to be constructed two and one half years sooner assuming there would be funds available.

The Tacoma Narrows toll bridge account must be reimbursed for the cost of the Burley-Olalla interchange with four years of completion of the interchange.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.