

SENATE BILL REPORT

ESB 5245

As Passed Senate, February 26, 2003

Title: An act relating to involving legislators in transportation planning.

Brief Description: Involving legislators in transportation planning.

Sponsors: Senators Horn, Haugen, Mulliken, Finkbeiner, Oke, Swecker, Esser, Prentice, Benton and Kohl-Welles.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Highways & Transportation: 1/23/03, 2/3/03 [DPA].

Passed Senate: 2/26/03, 45-4.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass as amended.

Signed by Senators Horn, Chair; Swecker, Vice Chair; Esser, Haugen, Mulliken, Oke, Prentice and Spanel.

Staff: Mike Groesch (786-7434)

Background: There are 14 regional transportation planning organizations (RTPOs) in Washington State. Each RTPO has a policy board that provides direction on the implementation of their six-year transportation improvement program (TIP) and their regional transportation plan. An RTPO policy board is required to include members from cities, counties, port districts, transit districts, major employers and the Department of Transportation.

The six-year TIP proposes regionally significant transportation projects and a financial plan that demonstrates how the program is to be funded. The six-year TIP is updated at least every two years, but can be amended during the interim.

The regional transportation planning process establishes standards for a regional transportation plan, coordination between RTPOs, and, in conjunction with state planning efforts, identifies and plans improvements that are important to moving people and goods on a regional and statewide basis.

An RTPO that borders another state may have voting members that reside in the adjacent state. The cross-boundary members are allowed to promote transportation planning coordination across state lines.

Summary of Bill: RTPO board membership is modified. Any member of the House of Representatives or the Senate whose districts are within the boundaries of the regional transportation planning organization are considered ex-officio, nonvoting board members of

the regional transportation planning organization. This does not preclude legislators from becoming full-time, voting board members.

A requirement is added that when the members of the Regional Transportation Planning Organization take action on matters that solely affect Washington State, there must be a majority vote of the Washington residents serving as members of the RTPO before the matter may be adopted.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: This bill further strengthens communications between state legislators and regional transportation planning organizations by providing contact between legislative members and the RTPO policy boards.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Lon Wyrick, Thurston RTPO; Ashley Probart, WSDOT.

House Amendment(s): It is clarified that a legislator is an ex officio nonvoting member of an RTPO whether his or her district is wholly or partly within the boundaries of an RTPO.