

SENATE BILL REPORT

SSB 5248

As Passed Senate, March 13, 2003

Title: An act relating to transportation.

Brief Description: Achieving transportation workforce efficiencies.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Highways & Transportation (originally sponsored by Senators Horn, Haugen, Prentice, Oke and Stevens).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Highways & Transportation: 1/23/03, 2/6/03 [DPS, DNP].
Passed Senate: 3/13/03, 49-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5248 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Horn, Chair; Swecker, Vice Chair; Esser, Finkbeiner, Haugen, Jacobsen; Oke and Spanel.

Minority Report: Do not pass.

Signed by Senator Prentice.

Staff: Greg Doss (786-7341)

Background: The Legislature and the Governor formed the Blue Ribbon Commission on Transportation (BRCT) in 1998 to assess the local, regional and state transportation system; ensure that current and future funding is spent wisely; make the system more accountable and predictable; and prepare a 20-year plan for funding and investing in the transportation system.

The commission made 18 recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature. Specific recommendations included adopting transportation benchmarks; investing in maintenance, preservation, and improvements of the entire transportation system so that benchmarks can be achieved; achieving construction and project delivery efficiencies; and using the private sector to deliver projects and transportation services.

The 2002 Legislature passed into law ESHB 2304 (C 5 L 02), an omnibus transportation efficiency act that addressed several Blue Ribbon recommendations. The workforce efficiency and local government reporting sections of ESHB were tied to Referendum 51 and thus became null and void upon its failure. SB 5248 contains only the sections of ESHB 2304 that became null and void.

Summary of Bill: Part I: Alternative Delivery Procedures for Construction Services: The Department of Transportation (DOT) must develop an employee retention program, including

a financial incentive program to recruit and retain employees. For augmentation purposes only, DOT may acquire construction-engineering services from private firms.

Part II: Apprenticeship and Adjustments to Prevailing Wage Provisions: The Apprenticeship Council must work with DOT to establish apprenticeship opportunities in transportation. The Department of Transportation must establish a human resources skills bank. The Department of Labor & Industries (L&I) must conduct an assessment of prevailing wages currently paid for transportation labor. One hundred thousand dollars of intent and affidavit fees is dedicated to L&I's prevailing wage survey process.

Part III: Transportation Planning and Efficiency: Counties, Public Transportation Benefit Areas, Regional Transit Authorities and municipalities must provide to the Transportation Commission a lowest lifecycle cost preservation management plan/assets inventory. Cities must provide the Transportation Commission a preservation rating on their arterial networks. The County Road Administration Board (CRAB) must develop county maintenance standards. CRAB reviews counties' maintenance plans.

Appropriation: \$100,000 to Department of Labor and Industries.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 20, 2003.

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

Testimony For: CRAB's reporting requirements should be addressed in the agency's annual report. Stratified random sampling may create a prevailing wage that is not representative of actual wages paid. Language protecting state jobs should be strengthened. Bill provisions will enhance the transportation workforce and positively affect statewide road maintenance efforts.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Jay Weber, CRAB; Miriam Moses, Rebound; Don Briscoe, IFPTE, Local 17.

House Amendment(s): A separate section makes the entire act null and void if new transportation revenues do not become law by January 1, 2004.