

SENATE BILL REPORT

SSB 5499

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Highways & Transportation, January 27, 2004

Title: An act relating to transferring accident data processing to the department of transportation.

Brief Description: Transferring accident data processing to the department of transportation.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Highways & Transportation (originally sponsored by Senators Oke, Haugen, Horn and Winsley; by request of Department of Transportation).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Highways & Transportation: 2/11/03, 3/5/03 [DPS]; 1/22/04, 1/27/04 [DP2S].

Passed Senate: 4/10/03, 44-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: That Second Substitute Senate Bill No. 5499 be substituted therefor, and the second substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Horn, Chair; Benton, Vice Chair; Swecker, Vice Chair; Haugen, Jacobsen, Kastama, Murray, Oke, Poulsen and Spanel.

Staff: Greg Doss (786-7341)

Background: Under current law, the Washington State Patrol (WSP) is responsible for receiving, processing and distributing reports filed by citizens involved in motor vehicle accidents. The 2001 Legislature transferred the responsibility for administering collision records from the State Patrol to the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT). The transfer is effective on July 1, 2003. The WSP, WSDOT and Department of Licensing collision records transition team drafted SB 5499 to enact the statutory changes necessary to implement the transfer.

Summary of Second Substitute Bill: Coroners and other public officials responsible for processing collision reports must forward such reports to the Department of Transportation. All statutory responsibility for adopting rules, collecting, reporting and administering collision reports is transferred from the Washington State Patrol to the Secretary of Transportation.

Second Substitute Bill Compared to Substitute Bill: The effective date of July 1, 2003, is removed. The design of a collision report form must be approved by the Chief of the Washington State Patrol. The statutory threshold for collision reporting is repealed. The threshold is continued to be set in WAC by the Chief of the Washington State Patrol.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: The WSDOT and WSP support the agency request legislation.

Testimony Against: As a neutral party, the WSP should retain the responsibility for setting the collision reporting dollar threshold. The WSP should retain the authority to conduct collision follow up investigations. The WSDOT may not provide public access to accident reports or data.

Testified: Rick Smith, WSDOT (pro); Capt. Glenn Cramer, WSP (pro); Rowland Thompson, Allied Daily Newspapers (con).