

**SB 6120-S.E - DIGEST**

(AS OF SENATE 2ND READING 3/12/2007)

Provides that, to the extent that state funds are used to improve rail infrastructure, the legislature declares that it is the policy of the state of Washington to examine the cost of any rail infrastructure improvement as compared to the public benefits to be gained by making the improvement according to the following priorities, in order of relative importance: (1) Economic, safety, or environmental advantages of freight movement by rail compared to alternative modes;

(2) Self-sustaining economic development that creates family-wage jobs;

(3) Preservation of transportation corridors that would otherwise be lost;

(4) Increased access to efficient and cost-effective transport to market for Washington's agricultural and industrial products;

(5) Better integration and cooperation within the regional, national, and international systems of freight distribution; and

(6) Mitigation of impacts of increased rail traffic on communities. In all cases, state investment in rail infrastructure should be allocated to leverage the greatest amount of partnership funding possible, and should only be considered when there is a demonstrably lower likelihood of obtaining the benefits specified in this act without at least some state funding of the infrastructure improvement.

Requires, by December 15th each year, the transportation commission to report to the transportation committees of the house of representatives and senate the commission's concurrence or disagreement with the advisability of the actions and projects recommended by the department of transportation in the plan developed by the department under this act. The commission shall base its determinations on the priorities identified in this act, and an evaluation of each action or project according to the methodology developed as part of the statewide rail capacity and needs study finalized in December 2006. If the commission finds that certain actions or projects do not appear within the department's plan, but warrant consideration, then the commission shall report its own analysis of the action or project to the transportation committees of the house of representatives and senate.