

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## ESHB 2524

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**As Passed House:**  
February 25, 2016

**Title:** An act relating to transportation funding and appropriations.

**Brief Description:** Making 2015-2017 supplemental transportation appropriations.

**Sponsors:** House Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Representatives Clibborn, Orcutt, Fey and McBride; by request of Office of Financial Management).

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Transportation: 2/22/16, 2/23/16 [DPS].

**Floor Activity:**

Passed House: 2/25/16, 84-13.

**Brief Summary of Engrossed Substitute Bill**

- Makes supplemental transportation appropriations for the 2015-17 fiscal biennium.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

**Majority Report:** The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 22 members: Representatives Clibborn, Chair; Farrell, Vice Chair; Fey, Vice Chair; Moscoso, Vice Chair; Orcutt, Ranking Minority Member; Hargrove, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Harmsworth, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Bergquist, Gregerson, Hayes, Hickel, Kochmar, McBride, Morris, Ortiz-Self, Pike, Riccelli, Rodne, Rossetti, Sells, Stambaugh and Tarleton.

**Minority Report:** Do not pass. Signed by 2 members: Representatives Shea and Young.

**Staff:** Amy Skei (786-7109)

**Background:**

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

The state government operates on a fiscal biennium that begins on July of each odd-numbered year. Supplemental budgets frequently are enacted in each of the following two years after adoption of the biennial budget. Appropriations are made in the biennial and supplemental transportation budgets for the operation and capital expenses of state transportation agencies and programs.

The 2015-17 State Transportation Appropriations Act appropriated \$7.6 billion from a combination of accounts. The Connecting Washington additive spending bill (Second Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill 5988) also made transportation-related appropriations for 2015-17. The 2015-17 Omnibus Operating Appropriations Act contained appropriations for transportation-related compensation increases.

**Summary of Engrossed Substitute Bill:**

The bill increases appropriations for the 2015-17 fiscal biennium by \$476 million. Fund transfers and other changes to the 2015-17 State Transportation Appropriations Act are also made.

**Appropriation:** The bill contains multiple appropriations. Please refer to the bill and supporting documents.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

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

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) Most of the changes are to existing projects and initiatives. We tried to be consistent and mostly said no to new things and moving projects forward. The budget was built collaboratively with input from the budget cabinet. It is good that there is \$1 million for the Department of Licensing for enhanced drivers' license (EDL) staffing and also \$250,000 for the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) for training technical staff. It may not be enough to deal with the changing environment for delivering projects. Many of the EDL staff live in the state's higher cost of living areas, and their pay is on the lower end for state workers. We are also losing lots of WSDOT workers due to retirement and to local governments that pay higher wages. We need to address compensation issues and competitiveness.

(Opposed) None.

(Other) There should be a vetted and prioritized freight project list for the new federal freight formula funds. It should include urban and rural corridors and first and last mile connectors. There should be a stronger relationship between the state and ports in planning for freight needs in the state. The bill contains a mechanism for planning and developing a vetted list. It allows us to participate in a dialogue on strategic investments, both road and rail, for the benefit of the citizens and moving Washington products. Clark County has the opportunity to create 300 jobs and develop 440 acres of zoned industrial land but access is a problem. The bridge at Salmon Creek is made of rotting wood and needs replacement to support Chelatchie

Prairie Railroad trains. The Spokane Central City Line will move students and workers in Spokane. We had planned to apply to the federal Small Starts Program for construction beginning in 2018, but our funding in this plan does not begin until 2021; this jeopardizes our project and ability to get federal funding.

**Persons Testifying:** (In support) Representative Clibborn, prime sponsor; and Vince Oliveri, Professional and Technical Employees, Local 17.

(Other) James Thompson, Washington Public Ports Association; Sean Eagan, Northwest Seaport Alliance; Amber Carter, Portland Vancouver Junction Railroad; and Kathleen Collins, Spokane Transit Authority.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.