

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5649

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Transportation, February 13, 2017

Title: An act relating to modifying the eligibility requirements for certain counties to form a regional transportation planning organization.

Brief Description: Modifying the eligibility requirements for certain counties to form a regional transportation planning organization.

Sponsors: Senators Hawkins and Saldaña.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Transportation: 2/07/17, 2/13/17 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Authorizes certain counties, currently Okanogan County, to establish a Regional Transportation Planning Organization.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators King, Chair; Sheldon, Vice Chair; Hobbs, Ranking Minority Member; Liias, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Cleveland, Hawkins, O'Ban, Takko, Van De Wege, Walsh and Wilson.

Staff: Kelly Simpson (786-7403)

Background: Under current state law, Regional Transportation Planning Organizations (RTPO) are voluntary associations of local governments within a county, or within geographically contiguous counties, created primarily to prepare regional transportation plans and to ensure local and regional coordination of transportation planning within counties. An RTPO can cover both urban and rural areas and receives state funding in support of its planning efforts.

An RTPO must contain at least one complete county with a population of at least 100,000, or a population of at least 75,000 and contain a Washington State Ferries terminal.

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.

Alternatively, an RTPO must contain at least three counties regardless of population. An RTPO must include at least 60 percent of the cities and towns in the region representing at least 75 percent of the cities' and towns' populations.

There are currently RTPOs covering 36 of the 39 counties in Washington. Okanogan, Island, and San Juan Counties are not part of any RTPO. However, Island County is in the process of forming a single-county RTPO.

Summary of Bill: A county or counties with a population of at least 40,000 and covering a geographic area of at least 5,000 square miles may form an RTPO.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: Chelan and Douglas Counties formed a separate RTPO and Okanogan County is now without RTPO status. This bill allows Okanogan County to establish an RTPO and not be disadvantaged in the transportation planning arena. Okanogan County is the largest county in the state by geographic size and contains ten municipalities within its boundaries.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Brad Hawkins, Prime Sponsor; Carlene Anders, Mayor, City of Pateros.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.