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## Transportation Committee

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### HB 2949

**Brief Description:** Requiring transit passes to be provided by certain entities.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Macri, Chopp, Pollet and Valdez.

#### Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires institutions of higher education with a campus in a county with a population of more than 1,500,000 and a combined 50,000 students and employees, to provide all employees with free transit passes for travel to and from campus.
- Requires a report from any effected institutions of higher learning regarding the costs of the program, including a description of costs for various wage ranges.

**Hearing Date:** 2/29/20

**Staff:** David Munnecke (786-7315).

#### Background:

The Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) law was passed in 1991 and is incorporated into the Washington Clean Air Act. The stated goals of the CTR program are to reduce traffic congestion, air pollution, and petroleum consumption through employer-based programs that decrease the number of commute trips made by single-occupant drivers.

Each county containing an urban growth area, and each city within an urban growth area with a state highway segment exceeding a 100 person hours-of-delay threshold, as well as those counties and cities located in any contiguous urban growth area, are required to adopt a CTR plan and ordinance for major employers in the affected urban growth area. At present, the state's nine largest counties are required to implement CTR plans, which includes the counties of Clark, King, Kitsap, Pierce, Snohomish, Spokane, Thurston, Whatcom, and Yakima.

"Person hours-of-delay" means the daily number of hours of delay per mile experienced by people in their vehicles during the peak period of 6 a.m. to 9 a.m. "Major employer" means a

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private or public employer, including a state agency, that has 100 or more full-time employees at a single worksite who begin their regular workday between 6 a.m. and 9 a.m.

Counties implementing a CTR plan may contract with other organizations, such as the local transit system or regional transportation planning organization, to assist, oversee, or implement the CTR program within the county. To the extent a private or public employer worksite is not otherwise required to participate in a CTR program, voluntary participation is both allowed and encouraged.

Each major employer in a jurisdiction that adopts a CTR plan must develop and implement a CTR program which, among other things, includes a set of measures designed to achieve CTR goals. Examples of such measures include: giving preferential parking for high-occupancy vehicles; instituting or increasing parking charges for single-occupant vehicles; subsidizing transit fares; providing vans for van pools; and authorizing flexible work schedules. Each local jurisdiction must review each major employer's progress and good faith efforts toward meeting CTR goals at least once per year. Major employers are also required to annually review employee commuting and progress made toward meeting CTR goals.

Within the Washington State Department of Transportation's (Department) budget, funding is provided for the Department to manage and administer the CTR program, to provide technical assistance to organizations required to implement the CTR program, including the Department of Enterprise Services and state agencies, and to distribute to local jurisdictions and employers to offset some of the implementation costs.

More than 1,000 employers and more than 550,000 commuters statewide participated in the CTR program, as of 2017.

**Summary of Bill:**

Institutions of higher education with a campus in a county with a population of more than 1,500,000 and a combined 50,000 students and employees on the campus are required to provide all employees with transit passes. These transit passes must be at no cost to the employee and allow such employees to travel by transit to and from the campus where they are employed.

Any effected institutions of higher learning are required to provide a report to the Legislature by November 15, 2020, regarding the costs of the program, including a description of the total cost of the program for the following employee wage ranges:

- less than \$50,000 per year;
- \$50,000 to \$75,000 per year;
- more than \$75,000 to \$100,000 per year; and
- more than \$100,000 per year.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on February 24, 2020.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.