

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5855

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As of March 1, 2019

**Title:** An act relating to commute trip reduction.

**Brief Description:** Revising commute trip reduction.

**Sponsors:** Senators Fortunato and Hobbs.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Transportation: 2/25/19.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Major employers are required to develop and adopt Commute Trip Reduction plans.
- Current law allowing only a metropolitan municipal corporation performing transportation functions—King County, to operate transit service in King County, with certain exceptions, is repealed.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

**Staff:** Hayley Gamble (786-7452)

**Background:** Commute Trip Reduction. Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) is an employer-based program designed to promote the use of ride-sharing, public transportation, and non-motorized commuting in order to reduce air pollution, energy use, and traffic congestion. The state's first CTR laws were passed in 1991 and incorporated into the Washington Clean Air Act. A CTR program may include providing information on alternative commuting options, discounting parking rates for carpoolers, providing a bus pass, and permitting flexible work schedules. CTR legislation passed in 2006 requires public and private employers considered to be major employers to have a CTR program with defined CTR goals. Major employers are considered to be those with more than 100 employees at a single worksite located in certain urban growth areas, who begin their workday between 6:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. Smaller businesses may choose to voluntarily participate in CTR goals.

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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 Department of Transportation (DOT) provides technical assistance to employers and jurisdictions to develop the required CTR programs, staffs the CTR board that selects recipients of the CTR grants, and collects and maintains the CTR data.

King County Transit Service. Under current law, King County Metro is the only transit service allowed to operate within the area of a metropolitan municipal corporation performing transportation functions—King County, with exceptions for:

- taxis;
- school buses; and
- buses owned by an organization transporting only that organization's employees with no fee charged.

Other transit service can only operate via an agreement with King County. Currently, King County provides a shared employee shuttle agreement.

**Summary of Bill:** Legislative intent is to increase efficiencies within the commute trip reduction program. It is further the intent of the Legislature that this bill will provide for more efficient use of existing transit resources by allowing innovative practices, such as private company transit vehicles to pick up non-company passengers for a fee.

Current law allowing only a metropolitan municipal corporation performing transportation functions—King County, to operate transit service in King County, with certain exceptions, is repealed.

Commute Trip Reduction Statutes. Cities and Counties are required to review and approve, rather than adopt, CTR plans. Major employers are required to develop and adopt CTR plans. Once approved, CTR plans would be forwarded to DOT. At least every two years DOT would review employer's efforts toward meeting CTR goals. Employers would be eligible for CTR funds.

**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: This bill would be beneficial to the employer. Employers could say this is what is good for our company and helps get our employers to work. This would allow employers to share shuttles in King County. This bill provides flexibility and to allow for-profit transits to get involved in CTR.

CON: There is a lack of statewide collaboration. As someone with a lot of CTR experience I am against this bill. Work site plans are specific to a worksite and are very high level. Local and regional government elements of CTR are removed in this bill and they are important elements. There has been no collaboration on this bill.

OTHER: DOT opposes the changes to the CTR program in this bill. This bill does not align with the CTR board goals. It removes authority from regional planning organizations and creates a more complicated process. This bill makes the state role stronger.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Senator Phil Fortunato, Prime Sponsor.

CON: Karen Parkhurst, Planning and Policy Director, Thurston Regional Planning Council.

OTHER: Brian Lagerberg, Director of Public Transportation, WSDOT.

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