

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6398

As of January 29, 2020

Title: An act relating to transportation policy goals.

Brief Description: Expanding transportation policy goals.

Sponsors: Senators Saldaña, Nguyen, Lovelett, Lias and Wilson, C.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Transportation: 1/28/20.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Modifies Washington's transportation policy goals.
- Requires all new transportation projects or reductions of transportation projects, prior to inclusion in a budget authorization, to be evaluated by a variety of state agencies relative to the state's transportation policy goals and various metrics.
- States that budget authorizations should not include projects that do not score above a threshold determined by the Washington State Department of Transportation, and that the projects being evaluated should be included in a regional transportation planning organization existing regional plan.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Staff: Erica Bramlet (786-7321)

Background: There are currently six policy goals in statute for the planning, operation, performance of, and investment in, the state's transportation system. State transportation agencies are required in various statutes to perform their powers, duties, and functions in a manner consistent with these goals. The Office of Financial Management and the Washington State Department of Transportation (DOT) are required to prepare a biennial report to the Legislature with performance measures to measure progress on meeting these policy goals.

Summary of Bill: Washington's transportation policy goals are modified in the following ways:

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.

Current Law	Bill
<u>Economic Vitality.</u> To promote and develop transportation systems that stimulate, support, and enhance the movement of people and goods to ensure a prosperous economy.	<u>Economic Vitality.</u> To promote and develop transportation systems that support and enhance affordability, access to opportunity, and good jobs.
<u>Preservation.</u> To maintain, preserve, and extend the life and utility of prior investments in transportation systems and services.	<u>Preservation.</u> To maintain, preserve, and extend the life and utility of prior transportation systems and service investments that meet current and future needs and goals.
<u>Safety.</u> To provide for and improve the safety and security of transportation customers and the transportation system.	<u>Safety.</u> To provide for and improve the safety and security of transportation users, the transportation system, and anyone interacting with the system.
<u>Mobility.</u> To improve the predictable movement of goods and people throughout Washington state, including congestion relief and improved freight mobility.	removed
<u>Environment.</u> To enhance Washington's quality of life through transportation investments that promote energy conservation, enhance healthy communities, and protect the environment.	<u>Environment and Climate.</u> To enhance the quality of life through transportation investments that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, air pollution, water pollution, and toxics, promote energy conservation, and protect lands and waterways.
<u>Stewardship.</u> To continuously improve the quality, effectiveness, and efficiency of the transportation system.	removed
	New— <u>Accessibility.</u> To improve affordable access to the places and goods Washington residents, organizations, and businesses need to live, work, study, play, and pray.
	New— <u>Health and Resilience.</u> To promote healthy people and communities through pollution-free transportation, multimodal transportation, integrated land use and transportation projects, clean active transportation, and appropriate infrastructure.
	New— <u>Equity and Environmental Justice.</u> To eliminate historic and persistent barriers and prioritize investments meeting the goals in this section for highly impacted communities and

vulnerable populations, which includes direct inclusion in decision-making.

Prior to inclusion in a budget authorization, all transportation projects and any reductions in transportation projects are required to be evaluated by DOT using the above transportation policy goals. DOT is required to post the evaluation on their website, have a public input process that includes vulnerable populations in highly impacted communities, and include the following organizations in their evaluation process:

- DOT Active Transportation, Public Transportation, Multimodal Planning, and State Ferries divisions;
- Department of Ecology;
- Interagency Council on Health Disparities;
- Department of Health; and
- Department of Commerce.

Budget authorizations should not include projects that do not score above a threshold as determined by DOT, and only projects in an RTPO's existing regional plan should be evaluated. The required project evaluations must consider the following metrics for each policy goal, each with further considerations listed in the bill:

- Accessibility—alignment with land-use goals, and improving the capacity of people of all abilities, both rural and urban, to get to the places they need to be;
- Safety—reduction in fatalities and serious injuries;
- Environment and Climate—projects that help Washington meet greenhouse gas reduction targets, don't encourage sprawl, and aligns with legal requirements to protect the environment;
- Health and Resilience—promote and improve the health of people and communities;
- Equity and Environmental Justice—equitable participation in decision making by vulnerable populations and highly impacted communities, and identifying and targeting system investments for the reduction of harm;
- Preservation—maintain and preserve a transportation system that meets current and future goals; and
- Economic Vitality—support and enhance access to opportunity.

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 is a needed first step toward decision makers getting relevant data in preparation for new transportation funding in order to look at the transportation system holistically. Adding metrics and a scoring system will ensure the state is on track to meeting its goals by funding projects that are more equitable, safer, and more. Transportation is a top source of greenhouse gas emissions in the state, so health and environmental metrics should be added to address historic inequities.

CON: Authority should not be shifted from the Legislature to the executive branch. There is no clarity on what metrics mean, how they would be weighted to score projects, and which projects would need to be scored. Freight mobility should not be removed as part of the goals, as the movement of goods is a large contributor to the state's economy.

OTHER: The Transportation Commission already incorporates health, accessibility, equity, and more as part of the six current policy goals when conducting long-range transportation planning. Establishing more equitable goals and comprehensive metrics would be good, but the mobility goal drives most transportation data collection currently, so removing it could be problematic.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Rebecca Saldaña, Prime Sponsor; Bryce Yadon, Futurewise; Leah Missik, Climate Solutions; Cliff Traisman, Washington Environmental Council, Washington Conservation Voters; David Mendoza, Front and Centered; Noah Ramirez, Latino Community Fund; Keith Metcalf, Deputy Secretary, Washington State Department of Transportation.

CON: Jerry VanderWood, Associated General Contractors; Mike Ennis, Association of Washington Business; Sheri Call, Washington Trucking Association.

OTHER: Paul Parker, Transportation Commission; Chris Herman, Washington Public Ports Association.

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