

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## SSB 6170

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**As Passed House:**

March 12, 2026

**Title:** An act relating to adjusting monetary limits regarding contracting rules for state highway construction work and procurement.

**Brief Description:** Adjusting monetary limits regarding contracting rules for state highway construction work and procurement.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Senator King).

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Transportation: 3/5/26, 3/9/26 [DP].

**Floor Activity:**

Passed House: 3/12/26, 95-0.

**Brief Summary of Substitute Bill**

- Increases the maximum estimated cost of repairs or renovations that can be done by state forces from \$60,000 to \$100,000.
- Increases the maximum estimated cost of repairs or renovations that can be done by state forces in an emergency from \$100,000 to \$160,000, and requires that maximum amount to be annually adjusted for inflation.
- Increases the maximum estimated cost of work or procurement that the Washington State Department of Transportation can contract for, to enable a larger number of small businesses and veteran, minority, and women contractors, from \$100,000 to \$160,000.

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**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION**

**Majority Report:** Do pass. Signed by 26 members: Representatives Fey, Chair;

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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 part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

Bernbaum, Vice Chair; Donaghy, Vice Chair; Reed, Vice Chair; Barkis, Ranking Minority Member; Low, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Mendoza, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Schmidt, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Bronoske, Dent, Duerr, Engell, Entenman, Griffey, Hackney, Hall, Klicker, Ley, Nance, Paul, Ramel, Richards, Stuebe, Timmons, Wylie and Zahn.

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

**Background:**

The maximum estimated cost of repairs or renovations that can be done by state forces is \$60,000, and repairs or renovations with a greater estimated cost must be contracted for. The maximum estimated cost of repairs or renovations that can be done by state forces, when a delay in the work would jeopardize a state highway or constitute a danger to the public, is \$100,000 and such repairs or renovations with a greater estimated cost must also be contracted for.

The maximum estimated cost of work or furnishing of equipment, materials, supplies or operating services that may be contracted through rules adopted by the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), in order to enable a larger number of small businesses and veteran, minority, and women contractors, is \$100,000.

**Summary of Bill:**

The maximum estimated cost of repairs or renovations that can be done by state forces is increased from \$60,000 to \$100,000.

The maximum estimated cost of repairs or renovations that can be done by state forces, when a delay in the work would jeopardize a state highway or constitute a danger to the public, is increased from \$100,000 to \$160,000. Beginning January 1, 2027, this maximum amount must be annually adjusted for inflation, using the National Highway Construction Cost Index, and published on the WSDOT website.

The maximum estimated cost of work or furnishing of equipment, materials, supplies or operating services that may be contracted through rules adopted by the WSDOT, in order to enable a larger number of small businesses and veteran, minority, and women contractors, is increased from \$100,000 to \$160,000.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

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

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) On a regular project, the threshold for state work goes from \$60,000 to \$100,000. In an emergency, it goes from \$100,000 to \$160,000, and the level at which small business and minority business can be used goes from \$100,000 to \$160,000. There are great people that work in the WSDOT, and they should be kept busy. These numbers have not been increased since 2005, and it is time that the Legislature does something to improve that situation and support the WSDOT employees.

Many asked after the response time in December, what can be done to help things go faster and make things work more smoothly like they do in an emergency, and this is one of those solutions. Rates have not been increased since 2005. Last year, Washington State Ferries did receive the ability to increase their in-house maintenance limits in the transportation budget. This would bring all parts of the WSDOT in line, and the WSDOT is very supportive of this measure moving forward.

The state is in a position where a truck full of asphalt can trigger the bid limit criteria and the state cannot do a basic highway repair. Anywhere in the state, east side, west side, small town, urban city, it does not matter. The effort to raise these bid limits will make a really big difference to the in-house workforce and allow them to do the really basic work the state expects them to do, and their communities expect them to do. It will support the historic work split with the trades. The bid limits should not be raised so high that the trades do not get the work that they deserve.

(Opposed) None.

**Persons Testifying:** Senator Curtis King, prime sponsor; Kati Durkin, Washington Federation of State Employees; and Allison Krutsinger, Washington State Department of Transportation.

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