

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 1980

As of March 19, 2025

Title: An act relating to allowing certain private employer transportation services to use certain public transportation facilities.

Brief Description: Allowing certain private employer transportation services to use certain public transportation facilities.

Sponsors: House Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Representatives Zahn, Salahuddin, Parshley, Springer, Timmons, Street, Berg, Leavitt, Thai and Low).

Brief History: Passed House: 3/5/25, 97-0.

Committee Activity: Transportation: 3/20/25.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Authorizes local authorities, with approval from public transportation agencies, to permit private employer transportation services to use business access and transit-only lanes in counties with a population more than 2 million.
- Requires local authorities to have an established fee-for-use process in order to authorize lane use, and ensure operational performance metrics of the lane usage is met.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Staff: Jenna Forty (786-7755)

Background: Local authorities and the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) may designate any portion of the roadway under their respective jurisdiction for use of public transit vehicles, motorcycles, private motor vehicles with a specified number of occupants, and certain categories of private transportation vehicles with a minimum

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capacity of eight passengers, and when use of the facility does not interfere with operations of transit agencies.

Certain nonprofit transportation vehicles, passenger charter vehicles, private employer transportation service vehicles and auto transportation companies may qualify for exclusive or preferential use of the roadway. Preferential usage may be limited to specific days or times, or unlimited.

The usage of business access and transit (BAT) lanes is not authorized for private transportation provider vehicles, and local authorities are encouraged to have processes for private transportation providers to apply for lane use.

Private employer transportation service is defined as regularly scheduled, fixed-route transportation service similarly marked or identified to display the business name or logo on the driver and passenger sides of the vehicle, and is provided as benefit for the employee on behalf of the employer. Vehicles must meet annual certification requirements of WSDOT.

Summary of Bill: In counties with populations exceeding 2 million, local authorities may grant a fee-for-use permit to private transportation employer services, with approval of the public transportation providers, for use of transit-only lanes that allow other vehicles to use BAT lanes. Operational performance measures must be established by the local authority as well as standards for transit-only lanes to ensure continued efficiency, reliability, and safety of public transportation operations. Local authorities must obtain approval from public transportation providers to undergo a process for private transportation providers to apply for the use of transit-only lanes, and must work with public transportation providers to develop a list of facilities ineligible for usage by private transportation providers.

On an annual basis, local authorities, with input from public transportation providers, must assess attainment of performance measures and standards. If at least one of the performance measures or standards is unmet, the permit must be revoked. Revenues generated by the fee-for-use permits are limited for use to recovery of costs incurred for the local authority to administer permits, and any additional revenues must be used for maintenance and improvement of the transit-only lane, consistent with the public transportation provider plans.

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.