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**HOUSE BILL 1837**

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**State of Washington**

**69th Legislature**

**2025 Regular Session**

**By** Representatives Reed, Doglio, Leavitt, Berry, Parshley, Farivar, Taylor, Ramel, Fitzgibbon, Zahn, Thomas, Macri, Bronoske, Barkis, Scott, Pollet, and Nance

Read first time 02/04/25. Referred to Committee on Transportation.

1 AN ACT Relating to establishing intercity passenger rail  
2 improvement priorities; and adding a new section to chapter 47.79  
3 RCW.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** A new section is added to chapter 47.79  
6 RCW to read as follows:

7 (1) The legislature recognizes that intercity passenger rail is  
8 an integral part of the state's transportation system and is critical  
9 to the state's ability to meet the climate, public health, equity,  
10 and mobility goals of the state as it continues to experience growth.  
11 The legislature finds that intercity passenger rail is a highly  
12 efficient mode of transportation that connects small towns and major  
13 urban centers, and that the improvement of intercity passenger rail  
14 service through improvements to trip times, frequency, and  
15 reliability can enhance local economies and increase mobility options  
16 for Washington residents. Therefore, the legislature intends to  
17 reemphasize the need to prioritize the improvement of intercity  
18 passenger rail in the state by establishing updated targets for the  
19 department to use as it develops future plans for the Amtrak Cascades  
20 route, and by requiring clear communication about the factors that

1 influence what is achievable so that they can be properly evaluated  
2 and, where possible, addressed.

3 (2) The following targets, with a goal of being met by 2035, are  
4 established for the Amtrak Cascades service:

5 (a) Two hour and 30 minute trip times between Seattle and  
6 Portland, with a minimum of 14 roundtrips per day;

7 (b) Two hour and 45 minute trip times between Seattle and  
8 Vancouver, British Columbia, with a minimum of five roundtrips per  
9 day; and

10 (c) A minimum trip reliability of 88 percent on-time performance.

11 (3)(a) The department is required to prioritize the targets set  
12 in subsection (2) of this section as it conducts project development  
13 work, including for the federal corridor identification and  
14 development program and for work that may be done in the future as  
15 part of the federal-state partnership for intercity passenger rail  
16 grant program. Project development work carried out by the department  
17 must include infrastructure investments and extensive coordination  
18 with host railroads, and other service partners, as necessary to  
19 achieve these targets.

20 (b)(i) If the department finds that one or more of the targets  
21 set in subsection (2) of this section cannot be achieved due to a  
22 constraint unless it is mitigated by the legislature or another  
23 party, it must provide a full explanation of the constraint and  
24 detail what is necessary to mitigate it as part of the annual  
25 reporting requirement under (c) of this subsection.

26 (ii) If the department finds that one or more of the targets set  
27 in subsection (2) of this section cannot be achieved due to a  
28 constraint that cannot be mitigated, even with assistance from the  
29 legislature or another party, it must provide a detailed explanation  
30 of the reasons it believes a target should be modified, either  
31 temporarily or for the indefinite future, to accommodate the  
32 identified unavoidable constraint as part of the annual reporting  
33 requirement under (c) of this subsection.

34 (c) The department must provide updates in an annual report to  
35 the transportation committees of the legislature, as well as to the  
36 joint transportation committee, on the department's progress in  
37 working towards the targets set in subsection (2) of this section by  
38 December 1st of each calendar year. The annual updates must include

1 any information required to be disclosed under (b) of this  
2 subsection.

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