
SENATE BILL 6270

State of Washington 69th Legislature 2026 Regular Session

By Senators Valdez, Hasegawa, Nobles, and Saldaña

Read first time 01/21/26. Referred to Committee on Transportation.

1 AN ACT Relating to establishing a passenger rail advisory
2 committee; and adding a new section to chapter 47.79 RCW.

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

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

6 (1)(a) The Washington state Amtrak Cascades passenger rail
7 advisory committee to the department is hereby established. The
8 legislative authorities of counties with a population of 750,000 or
9 greater in which there is a rail station on the Amtrak Cascades route
10 shall each appoint a delegation to consist of three members to serve
11 on the passenger rail advisory committee.

12 (b) The legislative authorities of other counties that contain a
13 rail station on the Amtrak Cascades route shall appoint a delegation
14 to consist of two members to serve on the passenger rail advisory
15 committee.

16 (2) The department shall conduct a review of community member
17 input on Amtrak Cascades service by soliciting and obtaining feedback
18 from local community groups in order to be properly informed about
19 challenges being experienced within the area served by the Amtrak
20 Cascades route. To promote local representation, the department shall

1 give prior notice of the review to the passenger rail advisory
2 committee established in subsection (1) of this section.

3 (3)(a) At least five people appointed to the passenger rail
4 advisory committee established in subsection (1) of this section
5 shall be representatives of an established passenger rail user group
6 or frequent users of the passenger rail system; at least one shall be
7 an individual or representative of a firm using or depending upon the
8 passenger rail corridor for commerce; and at least one member shall
9 be a representative of a local government planning body or its staff.
10 Each member shall reside in the vicinity of a passenger rail station
11 on the Amtrak Cascades route and within the county on whose
12 delegation the member sits.

13 (b)(i) The members of the passenger rail advisory committee shall
14 be appointed to four-year terms, except as provided in (b)(ii) of
15 this subsection (3). Any vacancy shall be filled for the remainder of
16 an unexpired term by the appointing authority.

17 (ii) The initial terms of each member of the passenger rail
18 advisory committee shall be staggered as follows: All terms shall
19 commence on July 1, 2026; for delegations with three members, two
20 members of the delegation's terms expire July 1, 2028, and one member
21 of the delegation's term expires July 1, 2030; and for delegations
22 with two members, one member of the delegation's term expires July 1,
23 2028, and one member of the delegation's term expires July 1, 2030.
24 Each appointing legislative authority shall designate the term length
25 to be served by each initial appointee.

26 (4) The passenger rail advisory committee established in
27 subsection (1) of this section shall meet three times each year with
28 representatives of the rail, freight, and ports division of the
29 department to review passenger rail concerns. The committee shall
30 appoint three cochairs by majority vote of the committee members and
31 they shall constitute an executive committee of the Washington state
32 Amtrak Cascades passenger rail advisory committee. The executive
33 committee shall meet with the designated representatives of the rail,
34 freight, and ports division of the department to determine the agenda
35 for passenger rail advisory committee meetings based on input from
36 the committee as a whole.

37 (5) The delegates to be appointed by the county legislative
38 authorities shall serve without fee or compensation.

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