
Transportation Committee

SSB 6088

Brief Description: Addressing commute trip reduction for state agencies.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Senators Fraser, Swecker, Haugen, Eide, Marr, Sheldon, Berkey, Benton and Shin).

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Transfers current responsibilities related to commute trip reduction (CTR) programs for state agencies from the Department of General Administration to the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT).
- Directs the WSDOT to develop a joint comprehensive CTR plan for all state agencies located in the Olympia, Lacey, and Tumwater urban growth areas.
- Requires state agencies located in the Olympia, Lacey, and Tumwater urban growth areas to, within 90 days after adoption of the joint CTR plan, implement a CTR program consistent with the adopted CTR plan.

Hearing Date: 3/23/09

Staff: Kathryn Leathers (786-7114)

Background:

Commute Trip Reduction.

The Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) law was passed in 1991 and is incorporated into the Washington Clean Air Act. The goals of the program are to reduce traffic congestion, air pollution, and petroleum consumption through employer-based programs that decrease the number of commute trips made by single-occupant drivers.

Each county containing an urban growth area (UGA), and each city within an UGA with a state highway segment exceeding the 100 person hours-of-delay threshold, as well as those counties and cities located in any contiguous UGA, are required to adopt a CTR plan and ordinance for major employers in the affected UGA. At present, the state's nine largest counties are required to

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implement CTR plans, which includes the counties of Clark, King, Kitsap, Pierce, Snohomish, Spokane, Thurston, Whatcom, and Yakima.

"Person hours-of-delay" means the daily number of hours of delay per mile experienced by people in their vehicles during the peak period of 6 a.m. to 9 a.m. A "major employer" means a private or public employer, including a state agency, that has 100 or more full-time employees at a single worksite who begin their regular workday between 6 a.m. and 9 a.m.

Counties implementing a CTR plan may contract with other organizations, such as the local transit system or regional transportation planning organization, to assist, oversee, or implement the program within the county. To the extent a private or public employer worksite is not otherwise required to participate in a CTR program, voluntary participation is both allowed and encouraged.

Each major employer in a jurisdiction that adopts a CTR plan must develop and implement a CTR program which, among other things, includes a set of measures designed to achieve CTR goals. Examples of such measures include: giving preferential parking for high occupancy vehicles; instituting or increasing parking charges for single-occupant vehicles; subsidizing transit fares; providing vans for van pools; and authorizing flexible work schedules. Each local jurisdiction must review each major employer's progress and good faith efforts toward meeting CTR at least once per year. Major employers are also required to annually review employee commuting and progress made toward meeting commute trip reduction goals.

A CTR Task Force (Task Force) was created and assigned the primary responsibility of establishing guidelines for the development of CTR plans by affected local jurisdictions to ensure consistency in plans and goals among jurisdictions. The Task Force was also charged with working with jurisdictions and major employers to develop and implement a public awareness campaign designed to increase local CTR program effectiveness, and reviewing and reporting on the progress of CTR plans to the Legislature.

Based on recommendations made by the Task Force to the Legislature in 2005, the Commute Trip Reduction Efficiency Act (Act) was enacted in 2006. The Act replaced the 28-member Task Force with a 16-member CTR Board (Board), chaired by the Secretary of the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) or her designee. Board membership includes representatives from two state agencies, one representative of the Office of the Governor, three representatives from local governments, two representatives from transit agencies, two representatives from regional transportation planning organizations, four representatives of employers, and two citizens. Among other things, the Act also modified the scope of the CTR program to focus on urban growth areas with the most congested state highways, and expanded the role of the WSDOT and regional transportation planning organizations in CTR planning.

The Legislature has also declared that it is the policy of the state that the Department of General Administration (GA) and other state agencies aggressively develop substantive programs to reduce commute trips by state employees. The GA is authorized to coordinate an interagency board for the purpose of developing policies or guidelines that promote consistency among state agency CTR programs. The policies and guidelines developed by the GA and the interagency board are applicable to all state agencies. State agencies that share a common location in urban growth areas where the total number of state employees is at least 100 must, with the assistance

of the GA, develop and implement a joint CTR plan. The GA must coordinate and review state agency CTR plans and performance reviews. Annually, the GA must submit a report to the CTR Board on progress in attaining applicable CTR goals.

Within the WSDOT budget, funding is provided for the WSDOT to manage and administer the CTR program, to provide technical assistance to organizations required to implement the program, including the GA and state agencies, and to distribute to local jurisdictions and employers to offset some of the implementation costs. In the 2007–2009 biennium, the state invested approximately \$5.5 million in CTR efforts and local governments (counties, cities, and transit systems) provided an additional investment.

More than 1,110 worksites and more than 560,000 commuters statewide participate in the CTR program. It is estimated that in 2007, CTR employees in the Central Puget Sound made more than 19,200 fewer vehicle trips each weekday morning than they did when their employers entered the program, and the absence of these trips reduced travel delay by an estimated 18 percent on average during the peak morning commute.

Capitol Campus Design Advisory Committee.

The Capitol Campus Design Advisory Committee (CCDAC) serves in an advisory capacity to the State Capitol Committee and the GA by reviewing programs, planning, designing, and landscaping of state capitol facilities. The CCDAC makes recommendations to support the attainment of architectural, aesthetic, functional, and environmental excellence in design and maintenance of capitol facilities located on the state capitol campus and in neighboring communities. The CCDAC's review must include consideration of the siting of state capitol facilities relative to the service needs of the state and the impact on the local community's economy, environment, traffic patterns, and other factors, and must also consider the comprehensive plans for long-range urban development of the cities of Olympia, Lacey, and Tumwater, and of Thurston County.

Summary of Bill:

The CTR responsibilities currently assigned to the GA regarding coordination of state agency CTR programs are shifted to the WSDOT, including: coordinating with the interagency board and reviewing individual agency programs for consistency with the policies and guidelines developed by the CTR Board. The WSDOT must review each agency's internal performance reports and submit a biennial report for state agencies to the Governor, and must also incorporate this state agency CTR biennial report into the CTR Board's report to the Legislature.

The WSDOT is directed to develop a joint comprehensive CTR plan for all state agencies, including institutions of higher education, located in the urban growth areas of the cities of Olympia, Lacey, and Tumwater. In developing the joint CTR plan, the WSDOT must collaborate with local jurisdictions, planning organizations, transit agencies, and the CCDAC. The joint plan must build on existing CTR programs and policies, and must include strategies for telework and flexible work schedules as well as performance measures and reporting requirements. No more than 90 days after adoption of the joint CTR plan, the state agencies located within the urban growth areas of the cities of Olympia, Lacey, and Tumwater must implement a CTR program consistent with the joint CTR plan.

A null and void is provided, specifying that funding must be provided in the Capital Budget Appropriations Act.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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