



MEMORANDUM

TO: Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council Board of Directors
FROM: Matt Ransom, Executive Director *MR*
DATE: April 7, 2015
SUBJECT: WA State Legislative Session Update

AT A GLANCE – INFORMATION

The purpose of this memorandum is to keep the RTC Board apprised of proposed state legislation.

BACKGROUND

The Washington State Legislature convened for its 2015 session on January 12 and is scheduled to complete its regular session on April 26. At the outset of the legislative session, RTC staff began tracking various bills that would raise new transportation revenue or revise laws that govern transportation funding, planning, and RTC operations. In addition to monitoring proposed legislation, staff are also assisting Legislators and RTC Member agency staff (and their lobbyists) by providing current information in regards to RTC plans and recommended project packages.

CURRENT STATUS

As of this report, the following information is provided.

Transportation (New Law) Revenue and Reform Bills

Senate:

- The Senate Transportation Committee passed out a series of New Revenue and Reform bills on March 2.

House:

- The House Transportation Committee held a public hearing on the Senate New Law transportation bills on March 26. Work Sessions and Hearings on the reform and related bills have taken place incrementally. A House New Law proposal with project earmarks is expected (as either a new House proposal or response to Senate bills.)

Transportation Operating (Current Law) Bills

Senate and House:

(Excerpts from Connections Public Affairs April 5 Report) Both the House and Senate introduced their current law transportation budgets this past week. These are the budgets that assume no new funding for transportation. The two chambers' budgets are very similar. There

are some differences on policy items. For instance, the House provides funding for the Transportation Commission to conduct a pilot project on a road user charge, while the Senate does not. The House also funds some practical design training at WSDOT, while the Senate does not. The Senate has lower funding levels for the Freight Mobility Strategic Investment Board and the Transportation Improvement Board than the House. The expectation is that the Senate assumes some current funding for those agencies in the Senate new revenue proposal.

The House and Senate Transportation Committees are scheduled to vote on their budgets this week.

NEXT STEPS

RTC staff will continue to monitor proposed bills which are currently or may be introduced during this legislative session. In addition to monitoring, RTC staff will provide information and input to the Board, Legislators, and RTC Member agency staff as requested and will provide testimony as appropriate to legislative hearings which advance the interests of current RTC Board policy.