

REVENUE: No revenue impact

FISCAL: Fiscal statement issued

Action:	Without Recommendation as to Passage With Amendments and Be Printed Engrossed, and Be Referred to the Committee on Ways and Means by prior reference
Vote:	7 - 0 - 3
Yeas:	Bailey, Bentz, Berger, Boone, Kahl, Schaufler, Beyer
Nays:	0
Exc.:	Edwards D., Gilman, Weidner
Prepared By:	Patrick Brennan, Administrator
Meeting Dates:	3/9, 4/21

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: Directs the Department of Transportation to study the feasibility of constructing a highway between Coos Bay and Ontario. Appropriates moneys from the General Fund to pay for the study. Declares an emergency and takes effect upon passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Importance to economy of south coast region
- International freight movement through west coast ports
- Existing east-west highway routes
- Potential cost of construction
- Estimated cost of study

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT: Removes requirement that the route studied pass through Bend.

BACKGROUND: Oregon currently has a number of highways that run east-west through the state. The primary east-west corridor is Interstate 84, which begins at an intersection with Interstate 5 in Portland and traverses the Columbia River Gorge through Pendleton, LaGrande, Baker City, and crosses into Idaho at Ontario. U.S. Route 30 connects Astoria to Portland, and has largely been replaced by I-84 from Portland to Ontario. U.S. Route 26 connects with U.S. 101 on the Oregon Coast at Seaside and runs through Portland, Madras, and John Day to the Idaho State Line. U.S. Route 20 intersects U.S. 101 at Newport and continues through Corvallis, crosses the Cascade range into Bend, through Burns and onto Ontario.

Currently, the shortest route from Coos Bay, on the Oregon Coast, to Ontario requires following U.S. 101 to Newport, to Oregon 34, to Interstate 5 to Eugene, onto Oregon 126 East, until it intersects with U.S. Route 20, which can be then followed through Bend and Burns into Ontario. House Bill 2437-A requires the Department of Transportation to conduct a feasibility study into the possibility of constructing a highway that would provide a direct route between Coos Bay to Ontario. The new highway is meant to be a limited-access expressway. The measure allocates an unspecified amount of money from the General Fund to conduct the study. The measure sunsets on January 2, 2012.