

HB 2662 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Joint Committee On Transportation

Action Date: 05/11/23

Action: Do pass with amendments and be referred to Ways and Means. (Printed A-Eng.)

House Vote

Yeas: 7 - Boshart Davis, Evans, Helfrich, Mannix, McLain, Nathanson, Pham K

Senate Vote

Yeas: 3 - Frederick, President Wagner, Woods

Abs: 2 - Boquist, Findley

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: No revenue impact

Prepared By: Patrick Brennan, LPRO Analyst

Meeting Dates: 2/21, 5/11

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Establishes the Willamette Valley Commuter Rail Task Force, consisting of 18 members appointed by the Speaker, Senate President, and Governor. Directs Task Force to study extending Westside Express Service commuter rail line to Salem, frequency and hours of service, establishing a new entity to administer the rail service, and opportunities to apply for funding through federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. Designates Legislative Policy and Research Office as staff support for Task Force. Directs Task Force to submit report to Legislative Assembly by September 15, 2024. Sunsets January 2, 2025. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Role of rail transportation in reducing carbon emissions
- Role of rail transportation in reducing traffic congestion
- Potential connections of extended Westside Express Service (WES) line
- Which entity should operate an extended WES service
- Need to ensure ability to continue to operate freight rail if on shared corridor
- Potential economic impact

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

Replaces the measure.

BACKGROUND:

TriMet is Oregon's largest provider of public transportation services, operating over 80 bus lines, five light rail lines, paratransit services, and one commuter rail line. The Westside Express Service (WES), inaugurated in February 2009, connects the Beaverton Transit Center to the Wilsonville Transit Center. The WES operates on freight tracks owned by the Portland & Western Railroad, and makes 10 trips north and south each weekday, roughly every 45 minutes. The WES service includes three intermediate stops and provides connections to the South Metro Area Regional Transit (SMART) system in Wilsonville, the Yamhill County Transit Area system in Tigard, and Salem-Keizer Area Mass Transit District, also known as Cherriots, via express bus from Wilsonville to Salem.

House Bill 2662 A creates an 18-member Task Force on Willamette Valley Commuter Rail to study and make recommendations on the potential to extend the WES commuter rail service to Salem.