HOUSE BILL 2691

Sponsored by Representative NATHANSON, Senator GORSEK; Representatives DEXTER, LEVY B, Senators DEMBROW, PATTERSON (Preession filed.)

SUMMARY

The following summary is not prepared by the sponsors of the measure and is not a part of the body thereof subject to consideration by the Legislative Assembly. It is an editor's brief statement of the essential features of the measure as introduced.

Provides that any agreement related to providing ultra-high-speed ground transportation in this state must include service to Eugene.

Prohibits Department of Transportation from expending in any biennium more than 50 percent, or $1 million, whichever is less, of moneys available to department for passenger rail service, on ultra-high-speed ground transportation.

Declares emergency, effective on passage.

A BILL FOR AN ACT

Relating to rail transportation; and declaring an emergency.

Whereas the Pacific Northwest Rail Corridor, Cascades Rail Corridor, is one of 11 federally designated high-speed rail corridors in the United States; and

Whereas the 462-mile Cascades Rail Corridor serves the most densely populated areas of the Cascadia region, linking Vancouver, British Columbia to Eugene, Oregon; and

Whereas additional rail transportation infrastructure is necessary to address the congested roads and airports in the Cascades Rail Corridor; and

Whereas the feasibility of developing ultra-high-speed ground transportation along the Cascades Rail Corridor requires a strong passenger rail service system; and

Whereas ultra-high-speed ground transportation is not intended to wholly replace the Amtrak Cascades intercity passenger rail system but instead serve as an additional, supplementary travel option throughout the region; and

Whereas continuing to improve existing passenger rail service speed, reliability, and frequency serves the transportation system immediately and helps build train ridership; and

Whereas it is vital that efforts to develop ultra-high-speed ground transportation in the region must include service to Eugene, Oregon; now, therefore,

Be It Enacted by the People of the State of Oregon:

SECTION 1. (1) The Department of Transportation is authorized to enter into agreements with other jurisdictions related to mutual planning for improved passenger rail service, including ultra-high-speed ground transportation, within the Cascades Rail Corridor. Any agreement related to ultra-high-speed ground transportation in this state must include providing service to Eugene. The department may adopt rules necessary to implement any agreement established under this section.

(2) The department may not expend in any biennium more than 50 percent, or $1 million, whichever is less, of the moneys available to the department for passenger rail service, on ultra-high-speed ground transportation.

SECTION 2. This 2023 Act being necessary for the immediate preservation of the public
peace, health and safety, an emergency is declared to exist, and this 2023 Act takes effect on its passage.