
Transportation Committee

HB 2072

Brief Description: Creating the Produce Railcar Pool.

Sponsors: Representatives Hankins, Murray, Woods, Grant, Schoesler, Clements and Newhouse.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Establishes a railcar program within Department of Transportation (DOT) for perishable commodities.
- Directs the DOT to work with stakeholders in implementing the program.

Hearing Date: 3/10/03

Staff: Jay Alexander (786-7339).

Background:

The transportation of agricultural products is accomplished by a variety of methods, including truck and rail.

Summary of Bill:

Directs the DOT to develop and oversee a railcar program for Washington's perishable commodity industries, modeled after the existing Grain Train program. Railcars may be acquired by purchasing used or accepting donated refrigerated railcars. Program funding would be required at a level suitable to facilitate and coordinate the program, and may be accepted from state, federal, and other public or private resources. A transportation management firm would be hired to manage the day-to-day operations of the cars, including monitoring location, coordinating distribution, and arranging repairs. The Essential Rail Assistance account would be expanded to allow for improvements, not just maintenance, or essential rail service.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not Requested.

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