

HB 2750 B STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Business and Transportation

Action Date: 05/31/17

Action: Do pass the B-Eng bill. Requesting referral to Rules.

Vote: 5-0-0-0

Yeas: 5 - Beyer, Girod, Monroe, Riley, Thomsen

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: Revenue impact issued

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WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Permits the Port of Hood River to establish a toll on bridges over which it has authority to operate and maintain. Authorizes the Port to sell or otherwise transfer ownership of any bridge, or its approaches that are owned by the Port, as part of a tollway project. Outlines circumstances under which the Port is subject to state contracting processes, prevailing wage rates, land use laws, and statutes governing public-private partnerships.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Role of public-private partnerships in infrastructure development
- Applicability of public contracting code
- Importance of Hood River bridge to port operations
- Work group seeking consensus on measure

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

The Hood River-White Salmon Bridge crosses the Columbia River at Hood River and provides access to the communities of White Salmon and Bingen in Washington. The bridge was constructed in 1924 and rebuilt with a lift span in 1938 following construction of the Bonneville Dam, necessitated by the increased water level. The Port of Hood River purchased the bridge in 1950, and currently charges a toll to cross. The estimated replacement cost of the bridge is \$250 million.

House Bill 2750-B clarifies that the Port of Hood River is authorized to establish a toll on bridges that it operates and maintains. The measure allows the Port to award a contract or other agreement related to a tollway project under a competitive process, by private negotiation, or both, regardless of other laws, specifying a process for a competitive process. The measure allows the Port to use any method necessary to comply with a grant or funding requirement, subjects projects to prevailing wage laws if public funds are involved, and treats any such project as a Port project with regard to land use laws. Certain documents presented to the Port as part of a determination of feasibility for a project are exempt from disclosure under public records law, while a final agreement is subject to disclosure. Finally, House Bill 2750-B limits the authority to sell or otherwise transfer ownership of bridges under the measure solely to the Port of Hood River as part of a tollway project.