

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

March 05, 2001
9:00 AM

Hearing Room D
Tapes 43, 44

MEMBERS PRESENT: Rep. Bruce Starr, Chair
Rep. Alan Brown, Vice-Chair
Rep. Richard Devlin
Rep. Jeff Kropf
Rep. Donna Nelson
Rep. Diane Rosenbaum
Rep. Joanne Verger
Rep. Cliff Zauner

MEMBER EXCUSED: Rep. Jeff Merkley, Vice-Chair

STAFF PRESENT: John Leon, Committee Administrator
Kate Campeau, Committee Assistant

MEASURE/ISSUES HEARD: Overview of Safety Corridors
HB 2569 Public Hearing and Work Session
HB 2137 Public Hearing and Work Session

These minutes are in compliance with Senate and House Rules. Only text enclosed in quotation marks reports a speaker's exact words. For complete contents, please refer to the tapes.

TAPE/#	Speaker	Comments
TAPE 43, A		
004	Chair Starr	Calls meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.
<u>OVERVIEW OF SAFETY CORRIDORS</u>		
006	Troy Costales	Safety Division Manager, Oregon Department of Transportation. Submits written material (EXHIBIT A) and gives overview of Safety Corridor Program.
010	Larry Christensen	Roadway Safety Work Zone Corridor, Oregon Department of Transportation. Comments on Oregon's Safety Corridor Program. States that typical actions within the safety program are: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enforcement• Education• Minor Engineering Defines safety corridor as a roadway where there is typically a higher than average crash or fatality rate
108	Rep. Devlin	Asks how many fatalities there have been on Highway 18 since 1999.
110	Costales	Answers that there have been 11.
112	Rep. Brown	Asks when rumble strips were put out.
116	Costales	Answers within the last six months.
118	Rep. Brown	Asks if this is the reason for the dramatic reduction of highway fatalities in 2000.
120	Costales	Answers that successes are a combination of factors.
137	Chair Starr	Asks if the fine is higher if caught speeding in safety corridors.

140	Christensen	Answers that Highway 18 and US 26 from Sandy to Mt. Hood are the two safety corridors where fines could be doubled.
185	Rep. Zauner	Asks about other types of investments that are appropriate.
187	Christensen	Answers investment in education and law enforcement.
235	Costales	Adds that some of the money comes from the U.S. Department of Transportation because of the .08 blood alcohol level statute, which is being funneled into minor engineering projects and some of the education and enforcement programs in the corridors.
247	Rep. Kropf	Asks how much money Oregon receives because of the .08 blood alcohol statute and are there other opportunities within the federal grant money to use for these types of enhancements.
	Costales	Answers that Oregon receives between \$1.8 and \$2 million dollars per year. Adds that most recently Washington and Texas joined the list of qualified states.
	Rep. Nelson	Asks if there are other grants available besides federal funding and if Oregon is getting everything back from tax dollars that we should be getting.
	Costales	Answers that he is not aware of any other programs. States that Oregon is one of six states receiving every safety incentive dollar that the U.S. Department of Transportation offers.
	Chair Starr	Opens a public hearing on HB 2569.

HB 2569 PUBLIC HEARING

328	John Leon	Committee Administrator. Reads synopsis of HB 2569.
349	Terry Thompson	Former State Representative. Testifies in favor HB 2569. Asks that the sunset be extended to get more information on impact of double fines on drivers.
381	Christensen	Concurs that this bill would seek to remove the sunset and allow the department to extend this policy to all safety corridors designated within the state. States that ODOT also recommends study time in order to study benefits of doubling fines in safety corridors. States that the public and the courts were confused about fines.
429	Rep. Nelson	Asks if there is a study which shows how doubling of fines has brought about greater compliance with law.
450	Christensen	Answers that such data is difficult to extract. However, there is a poll of citizen groups, law enforcement agencies and courts to see what their reaction was to the doubling of fines. Notes that the poll shows support for this policy.
500	Thompson	States that fines are not cheap. Advocates signage to be made more visible to warn the public that fines are doubled.
TAPE 44, A		
064	Rep. Verger	Asks for explanation of why safety corridors have been successful and asks why excessive number of signs are used.
072	Christensen	Answers that purpose of additional signs is to include side roads. Adds that reduced speeds are a key factor in reducing fatalities and serious accidents. States that not only is the speeding violation doubled but also driving under the influence and driving without a safety belt.
094	Rep. Verger	Asks if safety belt would be a doubled fine.
098	Thompson	Answers yes that a \$75 fine becomes \$150.
100	Rep. Verger	Testifies that safety belt class is very effective in changing driver behavior.

104	Christensen	Comments that the aim of law enforcement is voluntary compliance.
146	Rep. Kropf	Cautions that there ought to be flexibility in doubling of fines.
154	Rep. Nelson	Concurs with Rep. Kropf's statements. Asks how many people receiving fines are routine commuters or people from out-of-state. Questions the number of repeat offenders.
187	Christensen	States that reader boards are approximately \$8,000 each. States that he does not have figures on local speeders versus out of state speeders.
200	Costales	Submits written testimony (EXHIBIT B). Comments that only a handful of judges are impacted by the safety corridor double fine program, and that they have flexibility.
240	Christensen	Talks about vehicles that act as roadside assistance and message sign.
250	Rep. Rosenbaum	Asks if the bill clears up confusion about whether judges have flexibility in deviating from the double fine policy.
253	Costales	Answers that currently this bill does not have that clarification.
255	Rep. Rosenbaum	Asks if Mr. Costales' testimony was advocating having these fines be treated the same as construction zone fines.
302	Costales	Answers that this is correct. States that the bill in its original form does not treat fines the same as in construction zones.
305	Rep. Rosenbaum	Asks what change would be required. Asks if there was something in the language that created this ambiguity.
306	Christensen	Answers that the placement in ORS was misleading. States that when the actual law was read, the flexibility to remove, suspend or waive the bail was not there.
321	Thompson	Comments that law enforcement agencies are happy with the bill and are working with judges.
329	Chair Starr	Comments that in the event that the -1 amendments were amended into the bill then the additional signage would not be necessary.
331	Costales	Concurs that there would be zero fiscal impact.
333	Rep. Kropf	Asks question regarding doubled amounts for signs. Asks about 10% for maintenance costs.
344	Costales	Clarifies that is for replacement of signs.
375	Rep. Kropf	Asks for historical data on how much is being spent on signs at the present time.
377	Chair Starr	Closes the public hearing and opens a work session on HB 2569.
380	Rep. Brown	MOTION: Moves to ADOPT HB 2569-1 amendments dated 3/1/01.
390	Rep. Verger	Asks if this bill includes the 27 signs.
400	Chair Starr	Clarifies that this does not include signage. States that he is comfortable with this because of the fact that these safety corridors are working and reducing traffic fatalities.
407	Rep Kropf	States that higher fines are appropriate in certain road conditions. Concurs with Rep. Nelson's idea regarding second offenders. States that when faced with a much larger economic loss, he is more conservative in his actions. Adds that if it costs so much more to add signs to corridors, then perhaps consideration should be given to using the fees to pay for signs.
442	Rep Verger	Recommends that there is a better way to use signs.
466	Rep. Brown	MOTION: Moves HB 2569 to the floor with a DO PASS AS

468

Chair Starr

Chair Starr

AMENDED recommendation.

VOTE: 8-0

EXCUSED: 1 – Merkley

Hearing no objection declares the motion CARRIED.

REP. BROWN will lead discussion on the floor.

Closes the work session on HB 2569 and opens a public hearing on HB 2137.

TAPE 43, B

HB 2137 PUBLIC HEARING

007 Leon

Reads synopsis of HB 2137. States that there is no fiscal or revenue impact to this bill.

018 Kelly Taylor

Legislative Liaison, Oregon Department of Transportation. Describes bill and submits written testimony (**EXHIBIT C**). Explains that this is a housekeeping bill and makes vehicle-related technical changes.

091 Rep. Verger
095 Taylor

Asks about repeal of reporting accidents. Answers that a person would still be liable for civil damages. Clarifies that insurance is not required to operate vehicle.

120 Shirley Benson

Oregon State Snowmobile Association, Inc. Speaks to the efficacy of HB 2137 and submits written testimony (**EXHIBIT D**). Expresses her concern regarding the exemption of snowmobiles from reporting accidents and the potential of non-payment of claims by insurance companies.

130 Rep. Devlin

States concern that if DMV no longer licenses a vehicle, then it is hard to track an accident.

145 Taylor

States that there are very few accident reports from snowmobiles or ATV's.

156 Rep. Zauner

Clarifies that insurance companies must pay. States that he called the Insurance Commissioner to verify this information.

160 Rep. Verger

Commends Ms. Benson for her concerns and efforts to act responsibly on behalf of her organization.

166 Chair Starr

Closes the public hearing and opens a work session on HB 2137.

HB 2137 WORK SESSION

173 Chair Starr

MOTION: Moves to ADOPT HB 2137-1 amendments dated 2/13/01.

VOTE: 8-0

EXCUSED: 1 - Merkley

174 Chair Starr

Hearing no objection, declares the motion CARRIED.

175 Chair Starr

MOTION: Moves to ADOPT HB 2137-2 amendments dated 2/13/01.

VOTE: 8-0

EXCUSED: 1 - Merkley

176 Chair Starr

Hearing no objection, declares the motion CARRIED.

179 Rep. Devlin

MOTION: Moves HB 2137 to the floor with a DO PASS AS AMENDED recommendation.

VOTE: 8-0

AYE: In a roll call vote, all members present vote Aye.

EXCUSED: 1 - Merkley

181 Chair Starr

The motion CARRIES.

REP. DEVLIN will lead discussion on the floor.

185 Char Starr

Closes the work session on HB 2137. Adjourns meeting at 10:45 a.m.

Submitted By,

Reviewed By,

Kate Campeau,
Committee Assistant

John Leon,
Committee Administrator

EXHIBIT SUMMARY

A – Overview of Safety Corridors, written material, Troy Costales, 3 pp.

B – HB 2569, written testimony, Troy Costales, 3 pp.

C – HB 2137, written testimony, Kelly Taylor, 2 pp.

D – HB 2137, written testimony, Shirley Benson, 1 p