



Legislation Text

File #: 2013-0450, **Version:** 2

A MOTION expressing support for a special session of the Washington state Legislature to address statewide, regional and local transportation needs.

WHEREAS, the global recession has resulted in a steep decline in transportation revenues, including local sales tax revenues for public transportation and local funds used for road maintenance and improvements, and

WHEREAS, the transit division, which is also known as Metro, has reduced its multiyear funding shortfall by implementing the regional transit task force recommendations and through fare increases, reducing expenses, deferral of transit service increases, negotiation of a one-year wage freeze for employees, implementation of transit performance audit cost saving efficiencies, deletion of lower-performing bus routes, spending down of reserves, implementation of the temporary congestion reduction charge and other measures, and

WHEREAS, these gap-closing measures still leave a Metro transit system deficit that can only be closed by reduction of up to seventeen percent of bus service hours, or approximately six hundred thousand service hours, and

WHEREAS, a reduction of up to seventeen percent of bus services hours would eliminate, reduce or revise at least seventy percent of all Metro transit routes and increase personal automobile trips by more than twenty thousand trips per day, thereby increasing congestion costs associated with traffic delays;

WHEREAS, the road services division is responsible for an unincorporated area road network that supports more than one million trips per day serving urban and rural trip purposes. For several of King County's rural arterials, more than half of the commute trips originate in urban areas. The system consists of

about one thousand five hundred miles of county roads and one hundred eighty bridges, plus numerous sidewalks and pathways, traffic signs and signals, drainage pipes and culverts and other critical transportation infrastructure, and

WHEREAS, due to annexations as well as the global recession, the road services division has lost more than one-third of its funding and as a result reduced costs, eliminated hundreds of jobs and reduced road maintenance far below the level of effort required to maintain the long-term integrity of the unincorporated area road network, and

WHEREAS, the road services division also expects to close thirty-five bridges before they become unsafe, restrict access to seventy-two miles of failing roadways and reduce storm service on snowy and icy roads by approximately two-thirds this winter, among other consequences without funding to stabilize the declining road system, and

WHEREAS, King County cities also are beset by failing roads and bridges, congested corridors and bottlenecked interchanges, which undermine the mobility of vehicles, buses and freight-carriers to transport people and goods, and

WHEREAS, the Sound Cities Association, the King County executive and the mayor of Seattle have collaborated to develop a local transportation funding approach that would provide funding shared among transit and local mobility throughout the cities and unincorporated areas of King County should local transportation funding tools be established; and

WHEREAS, a countywide coalition of business, labor, education and advocacy organizations have come together as Keep King County Moving to call out the critical need for a robust statewide transportation package, including a local option revenue tool, to address needed transit funding and roads maintenance needs in King County;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT MOVED by the Council of King County:

A. The governor of the state of Washington is urged to call a special session of the state legislature in

2013 to address statewide, regional and local transportation needs; and

B. The members of the Washington state House of Representatives and Senate are strongly encouraged to work together to enact a balanced statewide transportation package, including new local transportation funding options, to address, at a minimum, immediate transportation system construction, maintenance, operations and preservation needs.