



STATE OF WASHINGTON  
OFFICE OF FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

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February 26, 2022

**TO:** Honorable Marko Liias, Chair  
Honorable Curtis King, Ranking Member  
Senate Transportation Committee

Honorable Jake Fey, Chair  
Honorable Andrew Barkis, Ranking Member  
House Transportation Committee

**FROM:** David Schumacher   
Director

**SUBJECT: OFM CONCERNS WITH SENATE AND HOUSE 2022 SUPPLEMENTAL  
TRANSPORTATION BUDGETS**

We appreciate your efforts in developing your 2022 supplemental transportation budgets. Though there are differences, the Senate, House, and governor's budgets include similar approaches and priorities. The purpose of this memorandum is not to identify every difference in the budgets, but to identify the most pressing concerns for your consideration as you continue working toward agreement on a final budget.

## **SENATE AND HOUSE BUDGETS**

### **Department of Licensing**

*Records and disclosure resources*

The timely processing of public records requests is a crucial task for the department. To handle a continued increase in requests, the agency requires at least \$727,000 (all funds) to hire more staff. It is also necessary that this appropriation be ongoing funding, not one-time.

## **SENATE BUDGET**

### **Department of Licensing, Department of Transportation and Washington State Patrol**

*Vacancy savings*

The Senate budget reduces the appropriations of DOL, WSDOT and WSP to realize savings from vacancies, while also providing contingency funds to address emergent issues and respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. The contingency funding is not sufficient to give these agencies the flexibility to address issues. The amount of the contingencies for each agency needs to be enough to restore at least half of the amount of the proposed vacancy savings reductions.

### **Department of Transportation**

*Encampment clean-up costs*

The governor's budget provided \$5,000,000 for WSDOT to address public health concerns and the clean-up of homeless encampments along the state's right of ways. The Senate budget provides only \$4,000,000 for this work. Considering the importance of providing WSDOT with the resources to continue this work with local communities, we request an additional \$1,000,000 without any restrictions.

## **Department of Transportation**

### *Vehicle miles traveled targets*

The Senate budget provides \$500,000 for WSDOT to update our state vehicle miles traveled (VMT) goals and to work with both the Department of Commerce and local jurisdictions on regional goals and strategies. The Senate retains language limiting this work to only a few counties. Given that the State Energy Strategy identified VMT reductions as a key strategy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, it is important for WSDOT's work to reflect local, regional and statewide strategies to reduce VMT. Please remove the language limiting this work to certain areas of the state.

## **Department of Licensing**

### *Towing and Impounded Vehicles Workgroup*

The proviso directs DOL to contract with a third-party consultant to convene a workgroup to review the legal findings in the Supreme Court's decision in *City of Seattle v. Long*. Not only was funding for a contract not provided, but the department does not have expertise related to towing and impounding vehicles. The proviso should be removed.

## **HOUSE BUDGET**

## **Department of Licensing and Washington State Patrol**

### *Vacancy savings*

The House budget reduces the appropriations of DOL and WSP to realize savings from vacancies, while also providing contingency funds to address emergent issues. The amount of contingency funding is not sufficient to give these agencies the flexibility to address issues. We request that the contingencies for DOL and WSP provide enough funding to restore at least half of the amount of the proposed vacancy savings reductions.

## **Department of Transportation**

### *Kingston traffic control*

The requirement in the proviso that directs the state ferry system to contract with a uniformed officer to provide additional traffic control assistance at the Kingston ferry terminal during certain peak times needs funding. WSF does not have sufficient funds to implement this traffic control without cuts to other operating budget activities. We request an appropriation of \$484,000 for this item.

### *Puget Sound Gateway Program surplus property*

The Department of Transportation is directed to sell certain surplus property purchased with the Motor Vehicle Fund at less than fair market value to be used for a non-highway purpose. We are concerned the proposed mechanism for reimbursing the Motor Vehicle Fund for the difference is insufficient to meet constitutional requirements. For this reason, we request a mechanism that more clearly provides a specific reimbursement for the Motor Vehicle Fund.

Thank you for your consideration. My staff and I are available to discuss these items in greater detail, and we look forward to further collaboration as you work toward a final transportation budget.

cc: Kelly Simpson, Senior Staff Coordinator, Senate Transportation Committee  
Mark Matteson, Senior Staff Coordinator, House Transportation Committee  
Nona Snell, Assistant Director for Budget, OFM  
Erik Hansen, Senior Budget Assistant, OFM  
Jamila Thomas, Chief of Staff, Office of the Governor