

King says public must be consulted before new taxes are proposed

Local News

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OLYMPIA, Wash. - Members of the House of Representatives Transportation Committee unveiled their 2013-15 transportation revenue package Wednesday. It calls for raising the gasoline tax by 2 cents each year for five years, increasing the commercial gross weight fee by 15 percent, raising the motor vehicle excise tax by 0.7 percent, raising the hazardous substance tax by 0.3 percent, and a new \$25 sales fee on bicycles over \$500. Sen. Curtis King, R-Yakima, and co-chair of the Senate Transportation Committee, said it's a proposal he expected. "It all boils down to whether the Legislature can make the case to the public that the state transportation system needs this influx of funds in order to keep addressing the transportation challenges we face. Since our citizens overwhelmingly approved Initiative 1185,

" I don't see how any transportation revenue package can move forward without either the support of two-thirds of the House and Senate — which I don't think is possible — or a public vote. Any transportation proposal will be a burden on our citizens and I believe they need to make the ultimate decision on how these projects are funded. As revenue proposals are brought forth, it is also our responsibility to look at reforms to make our transportation system more effective, efficient and less costly. I remain committed to working in a bipartisan fashion and gathering input from all sides, and we've already done a lot of good work. But there's a lot more work ahead of us before the 2013 session is over and we need to continue making progress toward reforms."