

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5088

As of February 15, 2013

Title: An act relating to the equal distribution of votes within certain taxing districts.

Brief Description: Concerning the equal distribution of votes within certain taxing districts.

Sponsors: Senators Benton, Rivers, Holmquist Newbry, Honeyford and Becker.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Governmental Operations: 1/28/13, 1/29/13 [DP, DNP].
Transportation: 2/14/13.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Roach, Chair; Benton, Vice Chair; Braun and Rivers.

Minority Report: Do not pass.

Signed by Senators Conway, Fraser and Hasegawa, Ranking Member.

Staff: Sam Thompson (786-7413)

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Staff: Hayley Gamble (786-7452)

Background: A 2009 act authorized transit agencies in border counties with populations of 400,000 or greater, currently Clark and Spokane counties, to establish independent local government entities called high capacity transportation corridor areas (HCTCAs) to finance and operate high capacity transportation services in urbanized areas. An HCTCA may be smaller than the area served by the transit agency.

An HCTCA may use varied revenue sources to finance operations, including sales and use taxes, if authorized by voters in the HCTCA. They may also issue general obligation bonds. To date, no HCTCA has been established.

Summary of Bill: An intent section indicates the Legislature's expectation that all voters within a transit district can vote on the creation of any high capacity transportation system

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within that transit district. All provisions authorizing the creation of HCTCAs and granting them authority to issue bonds are repealed.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony (Governmental Operations): PRO: All voters in a transit agency's jurisdiction should be given the opportunity to vote on ballot propositions to impose taxes in an HCTCA.

CON: The option to create an HCTCA should not be eliminated. Transit agencies need the flexibility that this option provides.

Persons Testifying (Governmental Operations): PRO: Mike Burgess, Clark County.

CON: Michael Shaw, WA State Transit Assn.; Jennifer Ziegler, Clark County Transit Benefit Area (C-Tran), Clark County Transit.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony (Transportation): PRO: The Clark County Commissioners believe that all voters within the boundary of a taxing district should have the opportunity to vote on that tax.

CON: C-Tran supported this proposal in 2009 but is against this bill. Those who did not want the service and did not want to pay for it also supported the original proposal. This bill is bad law. Tying benefits to the tax is good government. We would like this tool to let the voters decide. The Department of Transportation (WSDOT) opposes this bill. The 2009 bill provided a tool to local governments.

Persons Testifying (Transportation): PRO: Mike Burgess, Clark County.

CON: Jeff Hamm, C-Tran; Mike Shaw, WA State Transit Assn.; Brian LARGERBERG, WSDOT; Matt Ransom, City of Vancouver.