S-0514.1			
9-03T-1			

SENATE BILL 5567

62nd Legislature

2011 Regular Session

By Senators Regala, Hobbs, and White

State of Washington

Read first time 01/31/11. Referred to Committee on Government Operations, Tribal Relations & Elections.

- 1 AN ACT Relating to adjusting the property tax levy lid limits for
- 2 certain local services; amending RCW 84.55.050, 84.55.0101, 71.20.110,
- 3 73.08.080, 84.52.069, 84.52.043, and 84.52.010; and creating a new
- 4 section.

8

10 11

12

13 14

15

16

17

18

- 5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:
- 6 **Sec. 1.** RCW 84.55.050 and 2009 c 551 s 3 are each amended to read 7 as follows:
 - (1) Subject to any otherwise applicable statutory dollar rate limitations, regular property taxes may be levied by or for a taxing district in an amount exceeding the limitations provided for in this chapter if such levy is authorized by a proposition approved by a majority of the voters of the taxing district voting on the proposition at a general election held within the district or at a special election within the taxing district called by the district for the purpose of submitting such proposition to the voters. Any election held pursuant to this section ((shall)) may be held not more than twelve months prior to the date on which the proposed levy is to be made, except as provided in subsection (2) of this section. The ballot of the

p. 1 SB 5567

proposition ((shall)) <u>must</u> state the dollar rate proposed and ((shall)) <u>must</u> clearly state the conditions, if any, which are applicable under subsection (4) of this section.

1 2

3

4

5 6

7

9

10 11

12

13

1415

16

1718

19

20

21

22

23

24

2526

27

2829

30

3132

33

34

3536

37

 $(2)((\frac{a}{a}))$ Subject to statutory dollar limitations, a proposition placed before the voters under this section may authorize annual increases in levies for multiple consecutive years, up to six consecutive years, during which period each year's authorized maximum legal levy shall be used as the base upon which an increased levy limit for the succeeding year is computed, but the ballot proposition must state the dollar rate proposed only for the first year of the consecutive years and must state the limit factor, or a specified index to be used for determining a limit factor, such as the consumer price index, which need not be the same for all years, by which the regular tax levy for the district may be increased in each of the subsequent consecutive years. Elections for this purpose must be held at a primary or general election. The title of each ballot measure must state the limited purposes for which the proposed annual increases during the specified period of up to six consecutive years shall be used.

(((b)(i) Except as otherwise provided in this subsection (2)(b), funds raised by a levy under this subsection may not supplant existing funds used for the limited purpose specified in the ballot title. For purposes of this subsection, existing funds means the actual operating expenditures for the calendar year in which the ballot measure is approved by voters. Actual operating expenditures excludes lost federal funds, lost or expired state grants or loans, extraordinary events not likely to reoccur, changes in contract provisions beyond the control of the taxing district receiving the services, and major nonrecurring capital expenditures.

(ii) The supplanting limitations in (b)(i) of this subsection do not apply to levies approved by the voters in calendar years 2009, 2010, and 2011, in any county with a population of one million five hundred thousand or more. This subsection (2)(b)(ii) only applies to levies approved by the voters after July 26, 2009.

(iii) The supplanting limitations in (b)(i) of this subsection do not apply to levies approved by the voters in calendar year 2009 and thereafter in any county with a population less than one million five

hundred thousand. This subsection (2)(b)(iii) only applies to levies approved by the voters after July 26, 2009.))

- (3) After a levy authorized pursuant to this section is made, the dollar amount of such levy may not be used for the purpose of computing the limitations for subsequent levies provided for in this chapter, unless the ballot proposition expressly states that the levy made under this section will be used for this purpose.
- (4) If expressly stated, a proposition placed before the voters under subsection (1) or (2) of this section may:
- (a) Use the dollar amount of a levy under subsection (1) of this section, or the dollar amount of the final levy under subsection (2) of this section, for the purpose of computing the limitations for subsequent levies provided for in this chapter;
- (b) Limit the period for which the increased levy is to be made under (a) of this subsection;
- (c) Limit the purpose for which the increased levy is to be made under (a) of this subsection, but if the limited purpose includes making redemption payments on bonds, the period for which the increased levies are made ((shall)) must not exceed nine years;
- (d) Set the levy or levies at a rate less than the maximum rate allowed for the district; or
 - (e) Include any combination of the conditions in this subsection.
- (5) Except as otherwise expressly stated in an approved ballot measure under this section, subsequent levies ((shall)) must be computed as if:
 - (a) The proposition under this section had not been approved; and
- (b) The taxing district had made levies at the maximum rates which would otherwise have been allowed under this chapter during the years levies were made under the proposition.
- **Sec. 2.** RCW 84.55.0101 and 2007 sp.s. c 1 s 2 are each amended to read as follows:
 - (1) Upon a finding of substantial need, the legislative authority of a taxing district other than the state may provide for the use of a limit factor under this chapter of one hundred one percent or less, unless provided otherwise in subsection (2) of this section. In districts with legislative authorities of four members or less, two-thirds of the members must approve an ordinance or resolution under

p. 3 SB 5567

- this section. In districts with more than four members, a majority plus one vote must approve an ordinance or resolution under this section. The new limit factor ((shall be)) is effective for taxes collected in the following year only.
- (2) A taxing district imposing a levy under RCW 71.20.110, 73.08.080, and 84.34.230, or a permanent levy under RCW 84.52.069, as of or after the effective date of this section, may provide for the use of a limit factor under this chapter of the greater of one hundred one percent or inflation.
- 10 **Sec. 3.** RCW 71.20.110 and 1988 c 176 s 910 are each amended to 11 read as follows:

In order to provide additional funds for the coordination and provision of community services for persons with developmental disabilities or mental health services, the county governing authority of each county in the state ((shall)) must budget and levy, in addition to the county general levy, annually a tax in a sum equal to the amount which would be raised by a levy of two and one-half cents per thousand dollars of assessed value against the taxable property in the county to be used for ((such)) these purposes((: PROVIDED, That)). All or part of the funds collected from the tax levied for the purposes of this section may be transferred to the state of Washington, department of social and health services, for the purpose of obtaining federal matching funds to provide and coordinate community services for persons with developmental disabilities and mental health services. event a county elects to transfer ((such)) the tax funds to the state for this purpose, the state ((shall)) must grant these moneys and the additional funds received as matching funds to service-providing community agencies or community boards in the county which has made ((such)) the transfer, ((pursuant to)) under the plan approved by the county, as provided by chapters 71.24 and 71.28 RCW and by chapter 71A.14 RCW, all as now or hereafter amended.

32 The ((amount of a)) levy allocated to the purposes specified in this section may be reduced in the same proportion as the regular property tax levy of the county is reduced by chapter ((84.55)) 84.52 RCW.

SB 5567 p. 4

12

13

14

15 16

17

18

19 20

21

22

23

2425

26

2728

29

3031

Sec. 4. RCW 73.08.080 and 2005 c 250 s 6 are each amended to read 2 as follows:

- (1) The legislative authority in each county shall <u>budget and</u> levy, in addition to <u>the county general levy and</u> the taxes now levied by law, a tax in a sum equal to the amount which would be raised by not less than one and one-eighth cents per thousand dollars of assessed value, and not greater than twenty-seven cents per thousand dollars of assessed value against the taxable property of their respective counties, to be levied and collected as now prescribed by law for the assessment and collection of taxes, for the purpose of creating a veterans' assistance fund. Expenditures from the veterans' assistance fund, and interest earned on balances from the fund, may be used only for:
 - (a) The veterans' assistance programs authorized by RCW 73.08.010;
 - (b) The burial or cremation of a deceased indigent veteran or deceased family member of an indigent veteran as authorized by RCW 73.08.070; and
 - (c) The direct and indirect costs incurred in the administration of the fund as authorized by subsection (2) of this section.
 - (2) If the funds on deposit in the veterans' assistance fund, less outstanding warrants, on the first Tuesday in September exceed the expected yield of one and one-eighth cents per thousand dollars of assessed value against the taxable property of the county, the county legislative authority may levy a lesser amount. The direct and indirect costs incurred in the administration of the veterans' assistance fund ((shall)) must be computed by the county auditor, or the chief financial officer in a county operating under a charter, not less than annually. Following the computation of these direct and indirect costs, an amount equal to these costs may then be transferred from the veterans' assistance fund to the county current expense fund.
- 31 (3) The ((amount of a)) levy allocated to the purposes specified in this section may be reduced in the same proportion as the regular property tax levy of the county is reduced by chapter ((84.55)) 84.52 RCW.
- **Sec. 5.** RCW 84.52.069 and 2004 c 129 s 23 are each amended to read as follows:
- 37 (1) As used in this section, "taxing district" means a county,

p. 5 SB 5567

emergency medical service district, city or town, public hospital district, urban emergency medical service district, regional fire protection service authority, or fire protection district.

1 2

3 4

5

6

7

9 10

1112

13

14

15

16 17

18

19

20

21

2223

24

2526

27

28

29

30

3132

33

3435

36

37

38

- (2) A taxing district may impose additional regular property tax levies in an amount equal to fifty cents or less per thousand dollars of the assessed value of property in the taxing district. ((shall be)) is imposed (a) each year for six consecutive years, (b) each year for ten consecutive years, or (c) permanently. A tax levy under this section must be specifically authorized by a majority of ((at least three-fifths of the)) registered voters thereof approving a proposition authorizing the levies submitted at a general or special election((, at which election the number of persons voting "yes" on the proposition shall constitute three-fifths of a number equal to forty percent of the total number of voters voting in such taxing district at the last preceding general election when the number of registered voters voting on the proposition does not exceed forty percent of the total number of voters voting in such taxing district in the last preceding general election; or by a majority of at least three fifths of the registered voters thereof voting on the proposition when the number of registered voters voting on the proposition exceeds forty percent of the total number of voters voting in such taxing district in the last preceding general election)). Ballot propositions ((shall)) must conform with RCW 29A.36.210. A taxing district ((shall)) may not submit to the voters at the same election multiple propositions to impose a levy under this section.
- (3) A taxing district imposing a permanent levy under this section shall provide for separate accounting of expenditures of the revenues generated by the levy. The taxing district shall maintain a statement of the accounting which shall be updated at least every two years and shall be available to the public upon request at no charge.
- (4)(a) A taxing district imposing a permanent levy under this section shall provide for a referendum procedure to apply to the ordinance or resolution imposing the tax. This referendum procedure shall specify that a referendum petition may be filed at any time with a filing officer, as identified in the ordinance or resolution. Within ten days, the filing officer shall confer with the petitioner concerning form and style of the petition, issue the petition an identification number, and secure an accurate, concise, and positive

ballot title from the designated local official. The petitioner ((shall have)) has thirty days in which to secure the signatures of not less than fifteen percent of the registered voters of the taxing district, as of the last general election, upon petition forms which contain the ballot title and the full text of the measure to be referred. The filing officer shall verify the sufficiency of the signatures on the petition and, if sufficient valid signatures are properly submitted, shall certify the referendum measure to the next election within the taxing district if one is to be held within one hundred eighty days from the date of filing of the referendum petition, or at a special election to be called for that purpose in accordance with RCW 29A.04.330.

- (b) The referendum procedure provided in this subsection ((shall be)) is exclusive in all instances for any taxing district imposing the tax under this section and ((shall)) supersedes the procedures provided under all other statutory or charter provisions for initiative or referendum which might otherwise apply.
- (5) Any tax imposed under this section shall be used only for the provision of emergency medical care or emergency medical services, including related personnel costs, training for such personnel, and related equipment, supplies, vehicles and structures needed for the provision of emergency medical care or emergency medical services.
- (6)(a) If a county levies a tax under this section, no taxing district within the county may levy a tax under this section. If a regional fire protection service authority imposes a tax under this section, no other taxing district that is a participating fire protection jurisdiction in the regional fire protection service authority may levy a tax under this section. No other taxing district may levy a tax under this section if another taxing district has levied a tax under this section within its boundaries((: PROVIDED, That)), except as provided otherwise in (b) of this subsection (6).
- (b)(i) If a county levies less than fifty cents per thousand dollars of the assessed value of property, then any other taxing district may levy a tax under this section equal to the difference between the rate of the levy by the county and fifty cents((\div PROVIDED FURTHER, That)). However, if a taxing district within a county levies this tax, and the voters of the county subsequently approve a levying of this tax, then the amount of the taxing district levy within the

p. 7 SB 5567

county ((shall)) <u>must</u> be reduced, when the combined levies exceed fifty cents. Whenever a tax is levied countywide, the service shall, insofar as is feasible, be provided throughout the county((: PROVIDED FURTHER, That)).

- (ii) No county wide levy proposal may be placed on the ballot without the approval of the legislative authority of each city exceeding fifty thousand population within the county((\div AND PROVIDED FURTHER, That)).
- (iii) This section and RCW 36.32.480 ((shall)) do not prohibit any city or town from levying an annual excess levy to fund emergency medical services((: AND PROVIDED, FURTHER, That)).
- (iv) If a county proposes to impose tax levies under this section, no other ballot proposition authorizing tax levies under this section by another taxing district in the county may be placed before the voters at the same election at which the county ballot proposition is placed((: AND PROVIDED FURTHER, That)).
- $\underline{(v)}$ Any taxing district emergency medical service levy that is limited in duration and that is authorized subsequent to a county emergency medical service levy that is limited in duration(($\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{1}{2}$)) expires concurrently with the county emergency medical service levy.
- (7) The limitations in RCW 84.52.043 (($\frac{\text{shall}}{\text{shall}}$)) do not apply to the tax levy authorized in this section.
- (8) If a ballot proposition approved under subsection (2) of this section did not impose the maximum allowable levy amount authorized for the taxing district under this section, any future increase up to the maximum allowable levy amount must be specifically authorized by the voters in accordance with subsection (2) of this section at a general or special election.
- (9) The limitation in RCW 84.55.010 ((shall)) does not apply to the first levy imposed pursuant to this section following the approval of such levy by the voters pursuant to subsection (2) of this section.
 - (10) For purposes of this section, the following definitions apply:
- (a) "Fire protection jurisdiction" means a fire protection district, city, town, Indian tribe, or port district; and
- (b) "Participating fire protection jurisdiction" means a fire protection district, city, town, Indian tribe, or port district that is represented on the governing board of a regional fire protection service authority.

Sec. 6. RCW 84.52.043 and 2009 c 551 s 6 are each amended to read as follows:

3

4

5

7

8

9

10

1112

13

14

15

16 17

18

19

2021

22

2324

25

26

27

28

2930

3132

33

34

3536

37

38

Within and subject to the limitations imposed by RCW 84.52.050 as amended, the regular ad valorem tax levies upon real and personal property by the taxing districts hereafter named ($(shall\ be)$) are as follows:

- (1) Levies of the senior taxing districts ((shall be)) are as follows: (a) The levy by the state shall not exceed three dollars and sixty cents per thousand dollars of assessed value adjusted to the state equalized value in accordance with the indicated ratio fixed by the state department of revenue to be used exclusively for the support of the common schools; (b) the levy by any county shall not exceed one dollar and eighty cents per thousand dollars of assessed value; (c) the levy by any road district shall not exceed two dollars and twenty-five cents per thousand dollars of assessed value; and (d) the levy by any city or town shall not exceed three dollars and thirty-seven and onehalf cents per thousand dollars of assessed value. However any county is hereby authorized to increase its levy from one dollar and eighty cents to a rate not to exceed two dollars and forty-seven and one-half cents per thousand dollars of assessed value for general county purposes if the total levies for both the county and any road district within the county do not exceed four dollars and five cents per thousand dollars of assessed value, and no other taxing district has its levy reduced as a result of the increased county levy.
- (2) The aggregate levies of junior taxing districts and senior taxing districts, other than the state, shall not exceed five dollars and ninety cents per thousand dollars of assessed valuation. The term "junior taxing districts" includes all taxing districts other than the state, counties, road districts, cities, towns, port districts, and public utility districts. The limitations provided in this subsection shall not apply to: (a) Levies at the rates provided by existing law by or for any port or public utility district; (b) excess property tax levies authorized in Article VII, section 2 of the state Constitution; (c) levies for acquiring conservation futures as authorized under RCW 84.34.230; (d) levies for emergency medical care or emergency medical services imposed under RCW 84.52.069; (e) levies to finance affordable housing for very low-income housing imposed under RCW 84.52.105; (f) the portions of levies by metropolitan park districts that are

p. 9 SB 5567

protected under RCW 84.52.120; (g) levies imposed by ferry districts under RCW 36.54.130; (h) levies for criminal justice purposes under RCW 84.52.135; (i) the portions of levies by fire protection districts that are protected under RCW 84.52.125; ((and)) (j) levies by counties for transit-related purposes under RCW 84.52.140; (k) levies for developmental disabilities or mental health services under RCW 71.20.110; and (l) levies for veterans' assistance under RCW 73.08.080.

- **Sec. 7.** RCW 84.52.010 and 2009 c 551 s 7 are each amended to read 9 as follows:
- 10 <u>(1)</u> Except as is permitted under RCW 84.55.050, all taxes ((shall))
 11 must be levied or voted in specific amounts.
 - (2) The rate percent of all taxes for state and county purposes, and purposes of taxing districts coextensive with the county, ((shall)) must be determined, calculated and fixed by the county assessors of the respective counties, within the limitations provided by law, upon the assessed valuation of the property of the county, as shown by the completed tax rolls of the county, and the rate percent of all taxes levied for purposes of taxing districts within any county ((shall)) must be determined, calculated and fixed by the county assessors of the respective counties, within the limitations provided by law, upon the assessed valuation of the property of the taxing districts respectively.
 - (3) When a county assessor finds that the aggregate rate of tax levy on any property, that is subject to the limitations set forth in RCW 84.52.043 or 84.52.050, exceeds the limitations provided in either of these sections, the assessor ((shall)) must recompute and establish a consolidated levy in the following manner:
 - ((\(\frac{(1+)}{1+}\)) (a) The full certified rates of tax levy for state, county, county road district, and city or town purposes ((\(\frac{shall}{shall}\))) \(\text{must}\) be extended on the tax rolls in amounts not exceeding the limitations established by law; however any state levy ((\(\frac{shall}{shall}\))) \(\text{takes}\) precedence over all other levies and ((\(\frac{shall}{shall}\))) \(\text{may}\) not be reduced for any purpose other than that required by RCW 84.55.010. If, as a result of the levies imposed under RCW 36.54.130, \(\frac{71.20.110}{2.20.110}\), \(\frac{73.08.080}{2.30.800}\), 84.34.230, 84.52.069, 84.52.105, the portion of the levy by a metropolitan park district that was protected under RCW 84.52.120, 84.52.125, 84.52.135, and 84.52.140, the combined rate of regular property tax levies that

SB 5567 p. 10

are subject to the one percent limitation exceeds one percent of the true and fair value of any property, then these levies ((shall)) must be reduced as follows:

 $((\frac{1}{2}))$ (i) The levy imposed by a county under RCW 84.52.140 $(\frac{1}{2})$ must be reduced until the combined rate no longer exceeds one percent of the true and fair value of any property or shall be eliminated;

((\(\frac{(b)}{b}\))) (ii) If the combined rate of regular property tax levies that are subject to the one percent limitation still exceeds one percent of the true and fair value of any property, the portion of the levy by a fire protection district that is protected under RCW 84.52.125 ((\(\frac{shall}{shall}\))) \(\frac{must}{must}\) be reduced until the combined rate no longer exceeds one percent of the true and fair value of any property or ((\(\frac{shall}{shall}\))) eliminated;

 $((\frac{c}{c}))$ (iii) If the combined rate of regular property tax levies that are subject to the one percent limitation still exceeds one percent of the true and fair value of any property, the levy imposed by a county under RCW 84.52.135 must be reduced until the combined rate no longer exceeds one percent of the true and fair value of any property or $((\frac{must be}{c}))$ eliminated;

 $((\frac{d}{d}))$ (iv) If the combined rate of regular property tax levies that are subject to the one percent limitation still exceeds one percent of the true and fair value of any property, the levy imposed by a ferry district under RCW 36.54.130 must be reduced until the combined rate no longer exceeds one percent of the true and fair value of any property or $((\frac{must be}{d}))$ eliminated;

 $((\frac{\langle e \rangle}{}))$ <u>(v)</u> If the combined rate of regular property tax levies that are subject to the one percent limitation still exceeds one percent of the true and fair value of any property, the portion of the levy by a metropolitan park district that is protected under RCW 84.52.120 $((\frac{shall}{}))$ <u>must</u> be reduced until the combined rate no longer exceeds one percent of the true and fair value of any property or $((\frac{shall}{}))$ eliminated;

(((f))) <u>(vi)</u> If the combined rate of regular property tax levies that are subject to the one percent limitation still exceeds one percent of the true and fair value of any property, then the levies imposed under RCW 84.34.230, 84.52.105, and any portion of the levy imposed under RCW 84.52.069 that is in excess of thirty cents per

p. 11 SB 5567

thousand dollars of assessed value, ((shall)) <u>must</u> be reduced on a pro rata basis until the combined rate no longer exceeds one percent of the true and fair value of any property or ((shall be)) eliminated; and

 $((\frac{g}))$ (vii) If the combined rate of regular property tax levies that are subject to the one percent limitation still exceeds one percent of the true and fair value of any property, then the thirty cents per thousand dollars of assessed value of tax levy imposed under RCW 84.52.069 $((\frac{shall}{shall}))$ must be reduced until the combined rate no longer exceeds one percent of the true and fair value of any property or eliminated.

 $((\frac{(2)}{2}))$ (b) The certified rates of tax levy subject to these limitations by all junior taxing districts imposing taxes on such property $(\frac{(shall)}{must})$ be reduced or eliminated as follows to bring the consolidated levy of taxes on such property within the provisions of these limitations:

 $((\frac{a}{a}))$ (i) First, the certified property tax levy rates of those junior taxing districts authorized under RCW 36.68.525, 36.69.145, 35.95A.100, and 67.38.130 $(\frac{shall}{a})$ must be reduced on a pro rata basis or eliminated;

 $((\frac{b}{b}))$ (ii) Second, if the consolidated tax levy rate still exceeds these limitations, the certified property tax levy rates of flood control zone districts $(\frac{b}{b})$ must be reduced on a pro rata basis or eliminated;

 $((\langle c \rangle))$ (iii) Third, if the consolidated tax levy rate still exceeds these limitations, the certified property tax levy rates of all other junior taxing districts, other than fire protection districts, regional fire protection service authorities, library districts, the first fifty cent per thousand dollars of assessed valuation levies for metropolitan park districts, and the first fifty cent per thousand dollars of assessed valuation levies for public hospital districts, ((shall)) must be reduced on a pro rata basis or eliminated;

 $((\frac{d}{d}))$ (iv) Fourth, if the consolidated tax levy rate still exceeds these limitations, the first fifty cent per thousand dollars of assessed valuation levies for metropolitan park districts created on or after January 1, 2002, $(\frac{shall}{d})$ must be reduced on a pro rata basis or eliminated;

 $((\frac{(e)}{(e)}))$ <u>(v)</u> Fifth, if the consolidated tax levy rate still exceeds these limitations, the certified property tax levy rates authorized to

fire protection districts under RCW 52.16.140 and 52.16.160 and regional fire protection service authorities under RCW 52.26.140(1) (b) and (c) ((shall)) must be reduced on a pro rata basis or eliminated; and

(((f))) (vi) Sixth, if the consolidated tax levy rate still exceeds 5 these limitations, the certified property tax levy rates authorized for 6 fire protection districts under RCW 52.16.130, regional fire protection 7 8 service authorities under RCW 52.26.140(1)(a), library districts, metropolitan park districts created before January 1, 2002, under their 9 first fifty cent per thousand dollars of assessed valuation levy, and 10 public hospital districts under their first fifty cent per thousand 11 12 dollars of assessed valuation levy, ((shall)) must be reduced on a pro 13 rata basis or eliminated.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 8. Sections 2 through 4, 6, and 7 of this act apply to taxes levied for collection in 2012 and thereafter.

--- END ---

p. 13 SB 5567