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**HOUSE BILL 1606**

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**State of Washington 65th Legislature 2017 Regular Session**

**By** Representatives Pike, Tarleton, Orcutt, Stambaugh, Harmsworth, Gregerson, and Hargrove

AN ACT Relating to requiring transportation benefit districts to hold public hearings prior to imposing fees or charges by a vote of the governing board; and amending RCW 36.73.065.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

**Sec.**  RCW 36.73.065 and 2015 3rd sp.s. c 44 s 309 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) Except as provided in subsection (4) of this section, taxes, fees, charges, and tolls may not be imposed by a district without approval of a majority of the voters in the district voting on a proposition at a general or special election. The proposition must include a specific description of: (a) The transportation improvement or improvements proposed by the district; (b) any rebate program proposed to be established under RCW 36.73.067; and (c) the proposed taxes, fees, charges, and the range of tolls imposed by the district to raise revenue to fund the improvement or improvements or rebate program, as applicable.

(2) Voter approval under this section must be accorded substantial weight regarding the validity of a transportation improvement as defined in RCW 36.73.015.

(3) A district may not increase any taxes, fees, charges, or range of tolls imposed or change a rebate program under this chapter once the taxes, fees, charges, tolls, or rebate program takes effect, except:

(a) If authorized by the district voters pursuant to RCW 36.73.160;

(b) With respect to a change in a rebate program, a material change policy adopted pursuant to RCW 36.73.160 is followed and the change does not reduce the percentage level or rebate amount;

(c) For up to forty dollars of the vehicle fee authorized in RCW 82.80.140 by the governing board of the district if a vehicle fee of twenty dollars has been imposed for at least twenty-four months; or

(d) For up to fifty dollars of the vehicle fee authorized in RCW 82.80.140 by the governing board of the district if a vehicle fee of forty dollars has been imposed for at least twenty-four months and a district has met the requirements of subsection (6) of this section.

(4)(a) A district that includes all the territory within the boundaries of the jurisdiction, or jurisdictions, establishing the district may, after holding a public hearing, impose by a majority vote of the governing board of the district the following fees and charges:

(i) Up to twenty dollars of the vehicle fee authorized in RCW 82.80.140;

(ii) Up to forty dollars of the vehicle fee authorized in RCW 82.80.140 if a vehicle fee of twenty dollars has been imposed for at least twenty-four months;

(iii) Up to fifty dollars of the vehicle fee authorized in RCW 82.80.140 if a vehicle fee of forty dollars has been imposed for at least twenty-four months and a district has met the requirements of subsection (6) of this section; or

(iv) A fee or charge in accordance with RCW 36.73.120.

(b) The vehicle fee authorized in (a) of this subsection may only be imposed for a passenger-only ferry transportation improvement if the vehicle fee is first approved by a majority of the voters within the jurisdiction of the district.

(c)(i) A district solely comprised of a city or cities may not impose the fees or charges identified in (a) of this subsection within one hundred eighty days after July 22, 2007, unless the county in which the city or cities reside, by resolution, declares that it will not impose the fees or charges identified in (a) of this subsection within the one hundred eighty-day period; or

(ii) A district solely comprised of a city or cities identified in RCW 36.73.020(6)(b) may not impose the fees or charges until after May 22, 2008, unless the county in which the city or cities reside, by resolution, declares that it will not impose the fees or charges identified in (a) of this subsection through May 22, 2008.

(5) If the interlocal agreement in RCW 82.80.140(2)(a) cannot be reached, a district that includes only the unincorporated territory of a county may impose by a majority vote of the governing body of the district up to: (a) Twenty dollars of the vehicle fee authorized in RCW 82.80.140, (b) forty dollars of the vehicle fee authorized in RCW 82.80.140 if a fee of twenty dollars has been imposed for at least twenty-four months, or (c) fifty dollars of the vehicle fee authorized in RCW 82.80.140 if a vehicle fee of forty dollars has been imposed for at least twenty-four months and a district has met the requirements of subsection (6) of this section.

(6) If a district intends to impose a vehicle fee of more than forty dollars by a majority vote of the governing body of the district, the governing body must publish notice of this intention, in one or more newspapers of general circulation within the district, by April 1st of the year in which the vehicle fee is to be imposed. If within ninety days of the date of publication a petition is filed with the county auditor containing the signatures of eight percent of the number of voters registered and voting in the district for the office of the governor at the last preceding gubernatorial election, the county auditor must canvass the signatures in the same manner as prescribed in RCW 29A.72.230 and certify their sufficiency to the governing body within two weeks. The proposition to impose the vehicle fee must then be submitted to the voters of the district at a special election, called for this purpose, no later than the date on which a primary election would be held under RCW 29A.04.311. The vehicle fee may then be imposed only if approved by a majority of the voters of the district voting on the proposition.

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