

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 6346

As Passed House:

March 5, 1998

Title: An act relating to the incorporation of a city simultaneously with voter approval of local option taxes under chapters 81.104 and 81.112 RCW where the city's municipal boundaries cross the boundaries of a regional transit authority.

Brief Description: Allowing withdrawals from regional transportation authorities.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Senators Johnson and Heavey).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Transportation Policy & Budget: 2/23/98, 3/2/98 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 3/5/98, 98-0.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION POLICY & BUDGET

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 27 members: Representatives K. Schmidt, Chairman; Hankins, Vice Chairman; Mielke, Vice Chairman; Mitchell, Vice Chairman; Fisher, Ranking Minority Member; Cooper, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Backlund; Buck; Cairnes; Chandler; Constantine; DeBolt; Gardner; Hatfield; Johnson; McCune; Murray; O'Brien; Ogden; Radcliff; Robertson; Romero; Scott; Skinner; Sterk; Wood and Zellinsky.

Staff: Gene Baxstrom (786-7303).

Background: Regional transit authorities are authorized under state law to provide high capacity transit services. The central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority (RTA) was created by the action of the King, Pierce and Snohomish county councils. The authority board developed a high capacity transit system plan and defined the boundaries of the authority. Boundary requirements are that it include the largest-population urban growth area of each county; that it follow election precinct lines; and that if a portion of a city is determined to be within the service area, the entire city must be included within the boundaries of the authority. A process is set forth to annex areas to the RTA; however, no provision is made for boundary reduction.

This plan and the boundaries were approved by the three county councils. In November 1996, voters within the boundaries of the RTA approved a high capacity transit plan and authorized local option taxes to fund the plan.

At the same time that the voters approved the RTA, voters within a portion of unincorporated King County approved incorporation of the city of Covington. A portion of Covington lies within the boundary of the RTA, and a portion lies without the RTA boundary.

Summary of Bill: A city that lies partially within and partially outside the boundaries of an RTA, and whose vote to approve incorporation occurred simultaneously with a vote to impose local option taxes for the authority, may request to be removed from the authority's boundaries. With approval of two-thirds of the RTA board, the city is removed.

This provision expires December 31, 1998.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: The city of Covington was created at the same time as the RTA was approved by voters. Part of the city is in the taxing district, and areas of the city just across the street are not. City residents had voted against being in the RTA boundaries.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Senator Steve Johnson, prime sponsor; Rebecca Clark, Covington City Council; Alice Matz, Covington City Council; and Randy Scott, Puget Sound RTA.