

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 6574

As Passed House:
March 1, 2012

Title: An act relating to authorizing certain cities in which stadium and exhibition centers are located to impose admissions taxes in limited circumstances.

Brief Description: Authorizing certain cities in which stadium and exhibition centers are located to impose admissions taxes in limited circumstances.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Kohl-Welles, Frockt and Kline).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Ways & Means: 2/24/12 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 3/1/12, 96-2.

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Allows a city with a stadium and exhibition center to impose an admissions tax on sporting events conducted at the center by a state college or university that has temporarily closed a similar facility.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 27 members: Representatives Hunter, Chair; Darneille, Vice Chair; Hasegawa, Vice Chair; Alexander, Ranking Minority Member; Bailey, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Dammeier, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Orcutt, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Carlyle, Chandler, Cody, Dickerson, Haigh, Haler, Hinkle, Hudgins, Hunt, Kagi, Kenney, Ormsby, Parker, Pettigrew, Ross, Schmick, Seaquist, Springer, Sullivan and Wilcox.

Staff: Jeffrey Mitchell (786-7139).

Background:

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

When the stadium and exhibition center was built in Seattle, now known as Century Link Field, one of the funding mechanisms for the financing of the construction was an admissions tax at the facility. King County may levy an admissions tax up to 10 percent on events at the facility. The revenues from the admissions tax go towards paying bonds on the construction of the stadium and when the bonds are retired they go to pay for repair, re-equipping, and capital improvements. The rate of the admissions tax currently imposed is 3.1 percent.

The City of Seattle (City) currently has an admissions tax for entertainment or recreation events at the rate of 5 percent. However, the City is precluded under state law from imposing its tax at Century Link Field.

During the 2012 football season, the University of Washington will play its home games at Century Link Field while Husky Stadium is going through a renovation.

Summary of Bill:

The City of Seattle (City) is allowed to collect an admissions tax at Century Link Field during 2012 on admissions to college or university games that are played at that location due to the temporary closure of a similar facility owned by a college or university. The City may impose a maximum admissions tax of 5 percent at these events and the county may not impose an admissions tax at these events.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) The admissions tax generates about \$900,000 per year for the City of Seattle (City). The City will not be able to collect admissions tax while the Huskies play at Century Link Field. This bill allows the City to collect the same admissions tax while the team plays there. Local governments are hurting. The City will have a \$40 million deficit next year. This bill addresses a unique anomaly. The bill is very important because most of the admissions tax goes towards funding artists and cultural organizations.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Nick Licata, City of Seattle; Jon Rosen, Seattle Arts Commission; and Vincent Kitch, City of Seattle Office of Arts and Cultural Affairs.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.