

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5421

AS OF FEBRUARY 4, 1993

Brief Description: Establishing procedures for allocation of transit funding.

SPONSORS: Senator Skratek; by request of Department of Transportation

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Staff: Gene Baxstrom (786-7303)

Hearing Dates: February 4, 1993

BACKGROUND:

The central Puget Sound public transportation account (CPSPTA) and the public transportation systems account (PTSA) were created by the Transportation Funding Act of 1990. These accounts are funded, effective January 1, 1993, by a reduction in the motor vehicle excise tax (MVET), which local transit agencies may impose, from 0.815 percent to 0.725 percent.

When authorized, the CPSPTA was funded from the reduction of MVET for transit systems in King, Pierce and Snohomish counties. Those funds are pooled and may be used within the three-county region for high capacity transportation (HCT) system development, high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes and related facilities, and contributions required to fund projects approved by the Transportation Improvement Board (TIB). Population growth in Kitsap County now makes transit systems in Kitsap County participants in the CPSPTA.

The PTSA is funded by transit systems in the remainder of the state which impose the MVET. These monies may be used by the transit systems from which the funds are derived for the development of HCT systems, HOV lanes and related facilities, other public transit system-related roadway projects, and as contributions are required to fund projects approved by the TIB.

When these accounts were established, no process for distribution of monies was prescribed except that those monies could only be distributed by legislative appropriation.

In December 1991, the Legislative Transportation Committee completed an 18-month comprehensive policy review of transit systems in the state. Five of the recommendations from the review related to the two public transit accounts established by the Legislature in 1990 which became effective in January 1993. The recommendations related to funding of these accounts and the use and distribution of account funds.

Legislation to implement those recommendations was considered but was not enacted in 1992.

SUMMARY:

The uses of monies in the public transportation systems account (PTSA) and the central Puget Sound public transportation account (CPSPTA) are expanded to allow use for planning, development of capital projects, and for local match to federal programs. The Department of Transportation (DOT) is to develop a management plan for allocating monies within these accounts and submit it to the Legislative Transportation Committee (LTC) by September 1, 1993.

By October 1, 1993 and by July 1 of each even-numbered year thereafter, transit agencies may apply to the DOT for funding in the ensuing biennium for the types of projects eligible for each account. The department is to establish an advisory council of policy and technical experts specifically including transit agency representatives to assist in the review and prioritization of requests from transit agencies. The list of prioritized requests is to be included in the DOT biennial budget request. Transit agencies collecting the motor vehicle excise tax and regional transit authorities are eligible recipients.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: requested