

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5576

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Financial Institutions, Housing & Consumer Protection, February 10, 2005

Title: An act relating to fare cards for transportation facilities and services.

Brief Description: Exempting fare cards from the unclaimed property act.

Sponsors: Senators Poulsen, Swecker, Weinstein, Haugen and Rockefeller.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Financial Institutions, Housing & Consumer Protection: 2/2/05, 2/10/05 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS, HOUSING & CONSUMER PROTECTION

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Fairley, Chair; Berkey, Vice Chair; Benson, Brandland, Delvin, Franklin, Keiser, Prentice, Schmidt and Spanel.

Staff: Joyce Ahlering (360-786-7486)

Background: Travelers often purchase automated fare cards to use on public transport facilities. Fare cards simplify payments for use of multiple transit systems and save travel time by eliminating money exchanges on routes.

In addition, Washington State has unclaimed property laws that require businesses to make detailed reports to the Department of Revenue (DOR) on property of value that is unclaimed over a period of time. In some cases, this unclaimed property may include fare cards, creating a regulatory and financial burden on the transit agency that issued the certificate.

Summary of Bill: The state's abandoned or unclaimed property laws do not apply to fare cards.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Testimony For: This bill will prevent transit agencies from tracking thousands of cards for small amounts of money. It will ensure that the value of abandoned cards is reinvested in the transit system.

Testimony Against: None.

Who Testified: PRO: Melanie Newman, Sound Transit; Candace Carlson, Central Puget Sound Regional Fare Coordinator Project; Jim Shipman, Washington State Transit Association.