

SENATE BILL REPORT

ESHB 2111

As of February 24, 2014

Title: An act relating to the enforcement of regional transit authority fares.

Brief Description: Concerning the enforcement of regional transit authority fares.

Sponsors: House Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Representatives Farrell, Hayes, Fey, Rodne, Zeiger, Fitzgibbon, Morrell, Jinkins, Moscoso, Ryu and Freeman).

Brief History: Passed House: 2/13/14, 97-0.

Committee Activity: Transportation: 2/24/14.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Staff: Hayley Gamble (786-7452)

Background: A Regional Transit Authority (RTA) may issue civil infraction citations to users of its public transportation system who have not paid their fare, provided proof of payment, or will not leave the facility when requested to do so. Currently there is one RTA, Sound Transit. The required content of the citation is prescribed in current law. The specific format of the citation notice is determined by the state Supreme Court through their rulemaking process which in turn charges the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) with prescribing the content of the infraction form. Parking, standing, and stopping infraction tickets are excepted from the requirement to be prescribed by AOC and instead are approved through a simpler process.

Sound Transit currently issues civil infraction notices that are consistent with requirements laid out in statute, which includes using a form prescribed by AOC. Sound Transit submits the prescribed infraction form to the local district court, who then mails out the infraction notice. An alternative method would be to issue a printed infraction notice using a handheld device at the time of the infraction directly to the fare evader. The specific format of the infraction form printed from a handheld device must be approved by the Supreme Court through their rulemaking process which includes being determined by and approved by AOC.

Summary of Bill: The requirement for an RTA to issue a civil infraction citation in the same manner as prescribed for other civil infraction citations is stricken. The notice of civil

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infraction issued by an RTA enforcement officer must be approved by AOC in the same manner as for parking, standing, and stopping infractions.

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.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: This bill passed out of the House unanimously. Oversight is maintained by AOC and balanced with streamlining. Sound Transit has been working with AOC since 2012 and they have not been able to find a workable solution. Fare enforcement is a key part of Sound Transit's security program and ensures passengers are paying their fair share. We cannot write tickets on moving trains. Sound Transit has applied to AOC and been denied in the past.

OTHER: We have concerns. It is important to have uniform infractions. Sound Transit will have to go through the AOC process with or without this bill, there is little difference in the process. AOC is open to working with Sound Transit.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Representative Farrell, prime sponsor; Melanie Smith, Ken Cummins, Sound Transit.

OTHER: Sam Meyer, District and Municipal Court Judges Assn.