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**HOUSE BILL 1198**

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**State of Washington 68th Legislature 2023 Regular Session**

**By** Representatives Bronoske, Fey, Leavitt, and Jacobsen

AN ACT Relating to authorizing public transportation benefit areas to become limited authority Washington law enforcement agencies; amending RCW 36.57A.080; reenacting and amending RCW 10.93.020; and adding a new section to chapter 36.57A RCW.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

**Sec.**  RCW 10.93.020 and 2021 c 318 s 307 are each reenacted and amended to read as follows:

As used in this chapter, the following terms have the meanings indicated unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(1) "Agency with primary territorial jurisdiction" means a city or town police agency which has responsibility for police activity within its boundaries; or a county police or sheriff's department which has responsibility with regard to police activity in the unincorporated areas within the county boundaries; or a statutorily authorized port district police agency or four-year state college or university police agency which has responsibility for police activity within the statutorily authorized enforcement boundaries of the port district, state college, or university.

(2) "Federal peace officer" means any employee or agent of the United States government who has the authority to carry firearms and make warrantless arrests and whose duties involve the enforcement of criminal laws of the United States.

(3) "General authority Washington law enforcement agency" means any agency, department, or division of a municipal corporation, political subdivision, or other unit of local government of this state, and any agency, department, or division of state government, having as its primary function the detection and apprehension of persons committing infractions or violating the traffic or criminal laws in general, as distinguished from a limited authority Washington law enforcement agency, and any other unit of government expressly designated by statute as a general authority Washington law enforcement agency. The Washington state patrol and the department of fish and wildlife are general authority Washington law enforcement agencies.

(4) "General authority Washington peace officer" means any full-time, fully compensated and elected, appointed, or employed officer of a general authority Washington law enforcement agency who is commissioned to enforce the criminal laws of the state of Washington generally.

(5) "Limited authority Washington law enforcement agency" means any agency, political subdivision, or unit of local government of this state, and any agency, department, or division of state government, having as one of its functions the apprehension or detection of persons committing infractions or violating the traffic or criminal laws relating to limited subject areas, including but not limited to, the state departments of natural resources and social and health services, the state gambling commission, the state lottery commission, the state parks and recreation commission, the state utilities and transportation commission, the state liquor and cannabis board, the office of the insurance commissioner, the state department of corrections, ((~~and~~)) the office of independent investigations, and public transportation benefit areas.

(6) "Limited authority Washington peace officer" means any full-time, fully compensated officer of a limited authority Washington law enforcement agency empowered by that agency to detect or apprehend violators of the laws in some or all of the limited subject areas for which that agency is responsible. A limited authority Washington peace officer may be a specially commissioned Washington peace officer if otherwise qualified for such status under this chapter.

(7) "Mutual law enforcement assistance" includes, but is not limited to, one or more law enforcement agencies aiding or assisting one or more other such agencies through loans or exchanges of personnel or of material resources, for law enforcement purposes.

(8) "Primary commissioning agency" means (a) the employing agency in the case of a general authority Washington peace officer, a limited authority Washington peace officer, a tribal peace officer from a federally recognized tribe, or a federal peace officer, and (b) the commissioning agency in the case of a specially commissioned Washington peace officer (i) who is performing functions within the course and scope of the special commission and (ii) who is not also a general authority Washington peace officer, a limited authority Washington peace officer, a tribal peace officer from a federally recognized tribe, or a federal peace officer.

(9) "Primary function of an agency" means that function to which greater than fifty percent of the agency's resources are allocated.

(10) "Specially commissioned Washington peace officer," for the purposes of this chapter, means any officer, whether part-time or full-time, compensated or not, commissioned by a general authority Washington law enforcement agency to enforce some or all of the criminal laws of the state of Washington, who does not qualify under this chapter as a general authority Washington peace officer for that commissioning agency, specifically including reserve peace officers, and specially commissioned full-time, fully compensated peace officers duly commissioned by the states of Oregon or Idaho or any such peace officer commissioned by a unit of local government of Oregon or Idaho. A reserve peace officer is an individual who is an officer of a Washington law enforcement agency who does not serve such agency on a full-time basis but who, when called by the agency into active service, is fully commissioned on the same basis as full-time peace officers to enforce the criminal laws of the state.

**Sec.**  RCW 36.57A.080 and 1975 1st ex.s. c 270 s 18 are each amended to read as follows:

In addition to the powers specifically granted by this chapter a public transportation benefit area shall have all powers which are necessary to carry out the purposes of the public transportation benefit area. A public transportation benefit area may contract with the United States or any agency thereof, any state or agency thereof, any other public transportation benefit area, any county, city, metropolitan municipal corporation, special district, or governmental agency, within or without the state, and any private person, firm or corporation for the purpose of receiving gifts or grants or securing loans or advances for preliminary planning and feasibility studies, or for the design, construction or operation of transportation facilities. In addition a public transportation benefit area may contract with any governmental agency or with any private person, firm or corporation for the use by either contracting party of all or any part of the facilities, structures, lands, interests in lands, air rights over lands and rights-of-way of all kinds which are owned, leased or held by the other party and for the purpose of planning, constructing or operating any facility or performing any service which the public transportation benefit area may be authorized to operate or perform, on such terms as may be agreed upon by the contracting parties. Before any contract for the lease or operation of any public transportation benefit area facilities shall be let to any private person, firm or corporation, a general schedule of rental rates for bus equipment with or without drivers shall be publicly posted applicable to all private certificated carriers, and for other facilities competitive bids shall first be called upon such notice, bidder qualifications and bid conditions as the public transportation benefit area authority shall determine.

A public transportation benefit area may sue and be sued in its corporate capacity in all courts and in all proceedings.

A public transportation benefit area may become a limited authority Washington law enforcement agency, as defined under RCW 10.93.020.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 36.57A RCW to read as follows:

(1) Designated officers, employed by a public transportation benefit area, shall be vested with police powers to enforce the general criminal statutes or ordinances of the state:

(a) Within the boundaries of lands and property owned or managed by the public transportation benefit area;

(b) Within transportation facilities owned or managed by the public transportation benefit area, including but not limited to passenger terminal and parking facilities and properties; and

(c) Within any bus or other mode of public transportation owned or managed by the public transportation benefit area.

(2) Designated officers, employed by a public transportation benefit area, are authorized to issue traffic infractions for violations of state or local laws, ordinances, regulations, or resolutions relating to the stopping, standing, or parking of a vehicle that occur on property owned or managed by the public transportation benefit area or areas designated for buses or other modes of public transportation owned or managed by the public transportation benefit area, including but not limited to bus stops, bus lanes, and bus zones.

(3) Designated officers, employed by a public transportation benefit area, are authorized to enforce the public transportation area's rules, regulations, and policies regarding passenger conduct.

(4) Nothing in this section shall preclude general authority Washington peace officers as defined in RCW 10.93.020 from exercising concurrent jurisdiction with designated officers employed by a public transportation benefit area with respect to enforcing the laws, ordinances, regulations, or resolutions described in subsections (1) and (2) of this section.

(5) The authority granted to public benefit transportation areas in this section is in addition to any other authority provided by law.

**--- END ---**