

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5575

As of February 7, 2023

Title: An act relating to public transportation benefit area governing bodies.

Brief Description: Concerning public transportation benefit area governing bodies.

Sponsors: Senators Liias, Valdez, Nguyen, Lovelett, Lovick, Hunt, Conway, Frame, Hasegawa, Kuderer, Nobles, Randall, Saldaña, Salomon, Shewmake and Wilson, C..

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Local Government, Land Use & Tribal Affairs: 2/02/23 [w/oRec-TRAN].

Transportation: 2/07/23.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Revises governing board requirements for public transportation benefit areas to make the nonvoting labor organization representative into a voting member of the board.
- Eliminates the chair's or co-chairs' ability to exclude the labor representative from attending executive sessions, unless discussing negotiations with labor organizations.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Staff: Jenna Forty (786-7755)

Background: Public transportation benefit areas (PTBAs) are special taxing districts authorized under state law since 1975 for the purpose of providing regional public transportation within one or more counties. Governing bodies of PTBAs consist of elected representatives of each of the cities serviced within the area boundaries, and the county legislative authority of each county within the area. The governing body may not exceed

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

nine members, or 15 members for multicounty areas. There are currently 21 public transportation benefit districts across the state.

There is one nonvoting member of public transportation benefit areas recommended by the labor organization representing the public transportation employees. If employees are represented by more than one union, labor organizations must select the nonvoting member by majority vote. Any PTBA that has no employees represented by labor organizations is exempt from requirements to have a nonvoting member appointed. Governing bodies of PTBAs may exclude nonvoting labor representative members from participation in executive sessions pertaining to negotiations with labor organizations, and the chair or co-chairs can also exclude the nonvoting labor representative from attendance at any other executive session.

Summary of Bill: Public benefit transportation area governing boards are required to change the nonvoting labor representative of the board into a voting member from a labor organization. The ability of the chair or co-chairs of the authority to exclude the representative of a labor organization from attending executive sessions for issues not pertaining to labor negotiations is eliminated.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: Labor representation is an important voice to include on PTBA boards because transit operators have insights and experience on customer needs and transit operations. Including labor representatives in executive sessions can help inform important decisions.

CON: Labor already has input on board decisions through their nonvoting role. Giving labor a vote and inclusion into all executive sessions could blur the line between labor and management, and create conflicts of interest.

OTHER: Other membership should be looked at to add to PTBA boards, such as transit riders or disabled people who are users of the system.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Marko Liias, Prime Sponsor; Jeff Pack, Me; Robert Driskell, Teamsters; Russell Shjerven, Teamsters; Caleb Suttle, Teamsters; Kenneth price, ATU 587 President; Rhonda Bowers, ATU 1015; Jeremy Une, ATULC.

CON: Charles Prestrud, Washington Policy Center; Michael Shaw, Washington State

Transit Association.

OTHER: Joe Kunzler, None.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.