
SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 5537

State of Washington

58th Legislature

2003 Regular Session

By Senate Committee on Highways & Transportation (originally sponsored by Senators Benton, Prentice, Esser, Rossi, Finkbeiner, Johnson, T. Sheldon, Roach and Stevens)

READ FIRST TIME 03/04/03.

1 AN ACT Relating to transportation alternatives in central Puget
2 Sound; adding a new section to chapter 81.112 RCW; and creating a new
3 section.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** A new section is added to chapter 81.112 RCW
6 to read as follows:

7 (1)(a) A regional transit authority shall submit to the voters
8 within its service area, at the next general election after the
9 effective date of this act, a ballot proposition to provide for funding
10 and implementation of a light rail transit system in a county with a
11 population over one million five hundred thousand persons.

12 (b) A simple majority of those voting within the service area is
13 required for approval. If the vote is affirmative, the authority may
14 implement a light rail transit system in a county with a population
15 over one million five hundred thousand persons. If the vote is
16 negative, the authority shall not make any expenditure, incur any debt,
17 issue any bonds, nor enter into any agreement, for purposes of
18 implementing a light rail transit system in a county with a population
19 over one million five hundred thousand persons, except to make

1 expenditures solely for the purposes of retiring debt or fulfilling
2 contractual obligations, if any, relative to a light rail system,
3 incurred or entered into before the effective date of this act.

4 (2) Nothing in subsection (1) of this section prohibits a regional
5 transit authority from implementing programs other than a light rail
6 transit system in a county with a population over one million five
7 hundred thousand persons, including but not limited to commuter rail,
8 a bus rapid transit system, intercity bus service, park and ride lots,
9 other programs, or a light rail transit system in other counties within
10 an authority's service area.

11 (3)(a) A regional transit authority shall assess all resources
12 actually used, or intended or expected to be used, for a light rail
13 transit system in a county with a population over one million five
14 hundred thousand persons (including but not limited to all cash or
15 other assets, debt capacity or limits, and rights under agreements with
16 other entities), and determine the best alternative use of all such
17 resources, as between any of the following alternatives or any
18 combination of them:

- 19 (i) A bus rapid transit system;
- 20 (ii) Expanded commuter rail service;
- 21 (iii) Expanded bus or vanpool service; and
- 22 (iv) Any other allowed service.

23 (b) In connection with the assessment under (a) of this subsection,
24 a regional transit authority shall conduct at least six public hearings
25 and shall consult with, and obtain the views of, a city transportation
26 authority under chapter 35.95A RCW, and shall consider the need for
27 rapid regional transit connecting major destinations for employment,
28 shopping, recreation, and transportation purposes.

29 (c) If voter approval of implementing a light rail transit system
30 in a county with a population over one million five hundred thousand
31 persons is not obtained under subsection (1) of this section, a
32 regional transit authority shall reprogram the light rail resources to
33 the chosen alternatives and proceed with implementation.

34 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** This act is remedial in nature and applies
35 to all regional transit authorities established before or after the

1 effective date of this act.

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