

5659-S

Sponsor(s): Senate Committee on Government Operations & Elections
(originally sponsored by Senators Winsley, Kastama, Oke, Franklin,
Swecker, Rasmussen, Regala and Kohl-Welles)

Brief Description: Authorizing additional funding for local
governments.

SB 5659-S.2E - DIGEST

(DIGEST AS ENACTED)

Finds that local governments in the state of Washington face enormous challenges in the areas of criminal justice and public health.

Declares an intent to allow local governments to raise revenues in order to better protect the health and safety of Washington state and its residents.

Declares an intent to provide local governments relief from regulatory burdens that do not harm the public health and safety of the citizens of the state as a means of minimizing the need to generate new revenues authorized under this act.

Authorizes a county legislative authority to submit an authorizing proposition to the county voters and, if the proposition is approved by a majority of persons voting, impose a sales and use tax in accordance with the terms of chapter 82.14 RCW. The title of each ballot measure must include the purposes for which the proposed sales and use tax will be used. The rate of tax under this act shall not exceed three-tenths of one percent of the selling price in the case of a sales tax, or value of the article used, in the case of a use tax.

Provides that the retail sale or use of motor vehicles, and the lease of motor vehicles for up to the first thirty-six months of the lease, are exempt from tax imposed under this act.

Provides that one-third of all money received under this act shall be used solely for criminal justice purposes. For the purposes of this provision, "criminal justice purposes" means additional police protection, mitigation of congested court systems, or relief of overcrowded jails or other local correctional facilities.

Provides that money received under this act shall be shared between the county and the cities as follows: Sixty percent shall be retained by the county and forty percent shall be distributed on a per capita basis to cities in the county.

VETO MESSAGE ON SSB 5659

June 20, 2003

To the Honorable President and Members,
The Senate of the State of Washington

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am returning herewith, without my approval as to sections 3 and 5, Second Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill No. 5659 entitled:

"AN ACT Relating to authorizing additional funding for local governments;"

This bill responsibly addresses a growing problem in Washington State - the gap between local government revenues and expenses. It provides two different mechanisms for localities to deal with this situation. Both approaches have a common feature; they allow the taxes to take effect only if voters approve them.

However, two sections of the bill are unrelated to its title, "an act relating to authorizing additional funding for local governments," which could jeopardize the constitutionality of the entire act. Sections 3 and 5 amend the Growth Management Act (GMA). While I realize that various jurisdictions have problems with GMA implementation, any changes to GMA should only be undertaken after careful consideration of relevant issues. It is also questionable whether two counties should receive an extension of the timetable for updating their comprehensive plans without clearer comparison to other counties' problems in meeting their deadlines for such updates.

I hereby direct my staff to work with the Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development and with concerned stakeholders over the next five months on potential amendments to the GMA. The deliberations should focus on how we can meet the goals of the GMA, plan for economic development, and protect our environment, while recognizing the difficult fiscal conditions facing so many local governments. The stakeholders should include a representative group of cities and counties, as well as the Association of Washington Cities and the Washington State Association of Counties. It is my intention that we bring to the 2004 Legislature a set of GMA amendments that can be adopted with broad support.

For these reasons, I have vetoed sections 3 and 5 of Second Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill No. 5659.

With the exception of sections 3 and 5, Second Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill No. 5659 is approved.

Respectfully submitted,
Gary Locke
Governor