

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2337

As Reported by House Committee On:
Technology, Energy & Communications

Title: An act relating to services provided by television reception improvement districts.

Brief Description: Regarding services provided by television reception improvement districts.

Sponsors: Representative Armstrong.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Technology, Energy & Communications: 2/1/08, 2/5/08 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Allows television reception improvement districts to use the excise tax collected to construct, maintain, and operate public safety emergency radio communications systems.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TECHNOLOGY, ENERGY & COMMUNICATIONS

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 10 members: Representatives McCoy, Chair; Eddy, Vice Chair; Crouse, Ranking Minority Member; McCune, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Hankins, Herrera, Kelley, Morris, Takko and Van De Wege.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 2 members: Representatives Hudgins and Hurst.

Staff: Kara Durbin (786-7133).

Background:

Legislation allowing for the creation of television reception improvement districts was enacted in 1971. State law authorizes television reception improvement districts to be formed for the construction, maintenance, and operation of television and FM radio translator stations.

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

The business of the district is conducted by the board of a television reception improvement district. The board must ascertain and prepare a list on an annual basis of all persons believed to own television sets within the district and deliver a copy of the list to the county treasurer.

The county treasurer may collect an excise tax of no more than \$60 per year per television set. A person who owns more than one television set, but less than five television sets, may only be assessed for one television set. A motel, hotel, or any person owning more than five television sets must pay at a rate of one-fifth of the annual tax rate for each of the first five television sets and one-tenth of such rate for each additional television set.

An owner of a television set within the district is exempt if: (1) the television set does not receive at least a class grade B contour signal retransmitted by the television translator station or other similar device operated by the district; or (2) the television set receives a subscription to services of a community antenna system.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

The purpose section of the television reception improvement district statute is extended to include activities to construct, maintain, and operate public safety emergency radio communications systems.

A television reception improvement district may translate or retransmit signals which originate from public safety emergency radio communications systems.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The substitute bill adds the term "public safety" to clarify that television reception improvement district funds only may be used for public safety emergency radio communications systems.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date of Substitute Bill: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) These emergency radio systems are important, particularly in the more rural areas of the state. Over the years, these small television reception districts have grown to include emergency radio systems. Television reception district fees are paid through a voluntary system. We would like to be able to spread these funds across fire, police, and other services.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Armstrong, prime sponsor; and Sue Roberts, Methow Valley Communications District.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.