

FINAL BILL REPORT

EHB 1868

C 223 L 15
Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Expanding county road fund purposes for certain counties.

Sponsors: Representatives Lytton and Morris.

House Committee on Local Government
Senate Committee on Government Operations & Security
Senate Committee on Transportation

Background:

The Motor Vehicle Fund.

Under the 18th Amendment to the Washington Constitution, vehicle licensing fees, motor vehicle fuel taxes, and all other state revenue intended to be used for highway purposes must be paid into the State Treasury, placed in the Motor Vehicle Fund (MVF), and used only for highway purposes. Highway purposes include expenditures on construction, reconstruction, maintenance, repair, and betterment of public highways, county roads, bridges, and city streets. Highway purposes also include the operation of ferries that are a part of any public highway, county road, or city street.

The Rural Arterial Trust Account.

Within the MVF is the Rural Arterial Trust Account (RATA). All moneys in the RATA must be expended for: (1) the construction and improvement of county rural arterials and collectors; (2) the construction of replacement bridges funded by the federal bridge replacement program on access roads in rural areas; and (3) those expenses of the County Road Administration Board associated with the administration of the Rural Arterial Program.

To be eligible to receive funds from the RATA, counties must spend all revenues collected for road purposes only for purposes allowed under statute and the Washington Constitution. Allowable road purposes specifically include removal of barriers to fish passage and accompanying streambed and stream bank repair, and traffic law enforcement. The eligibility restriction does not apply to:

- counties with a population of less than 8,000;
- counties that expend revenues collected for road purposes only on other governmental services after authorization from county voters; and

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- monies diverted from the road district levy under applicable community revitalization financing statutes.

County Road Funds.

In each county, there is a fund known as the county road fund (CRF). Any funds that accrue to the county for use upon the roads must be credited and deposited into the CRF.

The CRF may receive funds from sources such as: (a) levies made by the county legislative authority for the purpose of raising revenue to establish, lay out, construct, alter, repair, improve, and maintain county roads, bridges, and wharves necessary for vehicle ferriage, and other proper county purposes; (b) the MVF; and (c) reimbursements by the federal government for expenditures made from the CRF.

Money paid to a CRF may be used for purposes enumerated such as:

- the construction, alteration, repair, improvement, or maintenance of county roads and bridges;
- wharves necessary for ferriage of motor vehicles;
- ferries;
- acquiring, operating, and maintaining machinery, equipment, quarries, or pits for the extraction of materials;
- the cost of establishing county roads, acquiring rights-of-way, and operating the county engineering office;
- programs directly related to county road purposes, specifically, insurance programs, self-insurance programs, and risk management programs; and
- any other proper county road purpose.

A county road purpose specifically includes construction, maintenance, or improvement of park-and-ride lots and the removal of barriers to fish passage.

Summary:

For counties that consist entirely of islands, county road purposes specifically include marine uses relating to navigation and moorage. These counties may deposit revenue from real and personal property taxes and county road tax levies into a subaccount of their CRF to be used for marine facilities, including mooring buoys, docks, and aids to navigation.

Counties that use revenue for marine uses and facilities in accordance with this authority are eligible to receive funds from the RATA.

Votes on Final Passage:

House	75	21	
Senate	46	3	(Senate amended)
House	81	16	(House concurred)

Effective: July 24, 2015