

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2029

As Reported by House Committee On: Transportation

Title: An act relating to population-based representation on the governing body of public transportation benefit areas.

Brief Description: Concerning population-based representation on the governing body of public transportation benefit areas.

Sponsors: Representatives Fey, Jinkins and Sawyer.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Transportation: 2/3/16, 2/9/16 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Requires the members of the governing board of certain public transportation benefit areas (PTBAs) to be selected, to the extent possible, to assure proportional representation of the cities and unincorporated sections of counties that are located within the PTBAs' boundaries.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 14 members: Representatives Clibborn, Chair; Farrell, Vice Chair; Fey, Vice Chair; Moscoso, Vice Chair; Bergquist, Gregerson, McBride, Moeller, Morris, Ortiz-Self, Riccelli, Rossetti, Sells and Tarleton.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 11 members: Representatives Orcutt, Ranking Minority Member; Hargrove, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Harmsworth, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Hayes, Hickel, Kochmar, Pike, Rodne, Shea, Stambaugh and Young.

Staff: David Munnecke (786-7315).

Background:

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.

Public Transportation Benefit Area.

A public transportation benefit area (PTBA) is a special-purpose district authorized to provide public transportation service within all or a portion of a county or counties. Generally speaking, "public transportation service" means the transportation of packages, passengers, and their incidental baggage by means other than by chartered bus or sight-seeing bus, together with the terminals and parking facilities necessary for passenger and vehicular access to and from such systems. It also means passenger-only ferry service for those PTBAs eligible to provide passenger-only ferry service. A PTBA may collect fares for service and, with approval of the majority of the voters within the area, impose up to a 0.9 percent sales and use tax within the area. A PTBA in a county with a population of 700,000 or more, which also contains a city with a population of 75,000 or more that operates a transit system, may impose a sales and use tax of up to 0.3 percent with the approval of the voters within the area, in addition to the up to 0.9 percent sales and use tax that all the PTBAs are eligible to impose.

A PTBA is created or its boundaries modified through a conference process attended by elected representatives selected by the legislative body of each city within the boundaries of the PTBA as well as the county legislative authority or authorities. Within 60 days of establishment, the county legislative body or bodies and the elected representatives of each city within the PTBA must provide for the selection of a governing body of not more than nine elected officials (or, in the case of a multi-county PTBA, not more than 15 members) selected by and serving at the pleasure of the governments of the cities and counties in the PTBA. Cities within the PTBA that are excluded from direct membership on the authority are permitted to designate a member of the PTBA who is entitled to represent the interests of those cities.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

The members of the governing board of a PTBA that is located in a county with a population of more than 400,000 that does not also contain a city with a population of more than 75,000 that operates a transit system pursuant to chapter 35.95 RCW, are required to be selected, to the extent possible, to assure proportional representation of the cities and unincorporated sections of counties that are located within the PTBA boundaries. If necessary to insure proportional representation, a single elected representative from one of the cities within the PTBA may represent multiple cities.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The proportionality requirement is limited to PTBAs located in counties with populations of more than 400,000 that do not also contain a city with a population of more than 75,000 that operates a transit system pursuant to chapter 35.95 RCW.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date of Substitute Bill: The bill takes effect on July 1, 2016.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) There is concern about the present law regarding PTBA boards because of the lack of proportional representation, which is not a problem for either Sound Transit or King County Metro.

The PTBA boards are currently made up of city and county elected officials. Many of these boards and, thus, their agencies are not focused on commute traffic but instead are focused on the whole service area. The seats on the board of a PTBA should be representative of the population of the district.

This bill would create PTBAs that are representative of the areas they serve. After the recession, there has been more use of transit systems throughout the state, and making the representation proportional would be more fair.

Pierce Transit riders often have no car and a majority have low incomes.

The Pierce Transit Board does not represent the people of the district. Tacoma has almost 40 percent of the population of the district but only two out of the nine seats on the Pierce Transit Board. When the PTBA was reduced in size, the number of members from Tacoma was reduced as well. However, most of the sales tax revenue for Pierce Transit comes from Tacoma.

There are already a lot of directly elected officials in Pierce County, and since the Pierce Transit Board members are part time they should probably not be directly elected to the PTBA board.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Fey, prime sponsor; Randall Lewis, City of Tacoma; and Cody Arledge, Transportation Choice Coalition.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.