

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2918

As Passed Legislature

Title: An act relating to granting a city or town the authority to establish and operate a traffic school without county consent, control, or supervision.

Brief Description: Granting a city or town the authority to establish and operate a traffic school without county consent, control, or supervision.

Sponsors: Representatives Gregerson, Pike, Moscoso, Orwall, Robinson, Hudgins, Van De Wege, Appleton, Stanford and Goodman.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Local Government: 2/3/16, 2/4/16 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 2/11/16, 87-9.

Passed Senate: 3/4/16, 48-0.

Passed Legislature.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Allows a city, town, or county to separately establish a traffic school, without the requirement that a city or town and the county in which it is located form a traffic school by agreement.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 8 members: Representatives Appleton, Chair; Gregerson, Vice Chair; Griffey, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Fitzgibbon, McBride, McCaslin, Peterson and Pike.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 1 member: Representative Taylor, Ranking Minority Member.

Staff: Cassie Jones (786-7303).

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.

The expressly stated purpose of a traffic school is to instruct persons appearing for training on the lawful and safe operation of motor vehicles. A city or town and the county in which it is located may establish a traffic school by agreement.

The county board of commissioners (board) has the authority to control and supervise a traffic school and to administer funds for a traffic school located in its county limits. A city or town is authorized to make appropriations for establishment and operation of a traffic school and is also authorized to accept and expend gifts and donations. All funds appropriated for the operation of a traffic school, however, must be administered by the board.

A traffic school may use fees collected for the cost of attending the traffic school that are in excess of the costs of the traffic school for safe driver education materials and programs, safe driver education promotions and advertising, or the costs associated with the training of law enforcement officers. A traffic school may not charge a fee in excess of the penalty for an unscheduled traffic infraction established by the Supreme Court, inclusive of the base penalty and all assessments and other costs required by statute or rule to be added to the base penalty.

Summary of Bill:

Cities, towns, and counties are allowed to establish traffic schools separately, without the requirement that the governing bodies form a traffic school by agreement. A traffic school established by a city, town, or county is under the control and supervision of the governing body that established it. All funds appropriated by the governing body that established the traffic school are deposited with that jurisdiction's treasurer and are administered by the governing body of the jurisdiction.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) A city that wishes to have its own traffic school must obtain authorization from the county in which the city is located. The cities want to be able to operate and pay for their own traffic schools so that their residents do not have to travel to attend a school elsewhere. City attorneys have advised cities against establishing traffic school programs because of current law which requires county approval and supervision. This bill would allow cities a local option to offer first time offenders the ability to attend the school in order to have a traffic infraction dismissed. The establishment of a city traffic school would benefit drivers, the courts, prosecutors, and police.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Gregerson, prime sponsor; and Annette Louie, City of SeaTac Police Department.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.