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SENATE BILL 5775

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State of Washington

69th Legislature

2025 Regular Session

By Senator Slatter

1 AN ACT Relating to expanding local taxing authority to fund  
2 public safety and community protection focused programs and services;  
3 and amending RCW 82.14.450 and 82.14.340.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 **Sec. 1.** RCW 82.14.450 and 2021 c 296 s 6 are each amended to  
6 read as follows:

7 (1) ((A)) (a) Except as provided in (b) of this subsection, a  
8 county legislative authority may submit an authorizing proposition to  
9 the county voters at a primary or general election and, if the  
10 proposition is approved by a majority of persons voting, impose a  
11 sales and use tax in accordance with the terms of this chapter. The  
12 title of each ballot measure must clearly state the purposes for  
13 which the proposed sales and use tax will be used. The rate of tax  
14 under this section may not exceed ((three-tenths of one)) 0.3 percent  
15 of the selling price in the case of a sales tax, or value of the  
16 article used, in the case of a use tax.

17 (b) A county legislative authority that adopts an ordinance or  
18 resolution to impose the tax under (a) of this subsection by January  
19 1, 2028, may impose the tax under (a) of this subsection without  
20 submitting an authorizing proposition to the county voters at a  
21 primary or general election.

1           (2) (a) ~~((A))~~ Except as provided in (b) of this subsection, a city  
2 legislative authority may submit an authorizing proposition to the  
3 city voters at a primary or general election and, if the proposition  
4 is approved by a majority of persons voting, impose a sales and use  
5 tax in accordance with the terms of this chapter. The title of each  
6 ballot measure must clearly state the purposes for which the proposed  
7 sales and use tax will be used. The rate of tax under this subsection  
8 may not exceed ~~((one-tenth of one))~~ 0.1 percent of the selling price  
9 in the case of a sales tax, or value of the article used, in the case  
10 of a use tax. ~~((A city may not begin imposing a tax approved by the~~  
11 ~~voters under this subsection prior to January 1, 2011.))~~

12           (b) Beginning December 31, 2025, a city legislative authority  
13 that adopts an ordinance or resolution to impose the tax under (a) of  
14 this subsection by January 1, 2028, may impose the tax under (a) of  
15 this subsection without submitting an authorizing proposition to the  
16 city voters at a primary or general election.

17           (c) If a county adopts an ordinance or resolution to ~~((submit a~~  
18 ~~ballot proposition to the voters to))~~ impose the sales and use tax  
19 under subsection (1) (a) or (b) of this section prior to a city within  
20 the county adopting an ordinance or resolution to ~~((submit a ballot~~  
21 ~~proposition to the voters to))~~ impose the tax under (a) or (b) of  
22 this subsection, the rate of tax by the city under this subsection  
23 may not exceed an amount that would cause the total county and city  
24 tax rate under this section to exceed ~~((three-tenths of one))~~ 0.3  
25 percent. This subsection (2) ~~((b))~~ (c) also applies if the county  
26 and city adopt an ordinance or resolution to impose sales and use  
27 taxes under this section on the same date.

28           ~~((e))~~ (d) If the city adopts an ordinance or resolution to  
29 ~~((submit a ballot proposition to the voters to))~~ impose the sales and  
30 use tax under (a) or (b) of this subsection prior to the county in  
31 which the city is located, the county must provide a credit against  
32 its tax under subsection (1) of this section for the city tax under  
33 this subsection to the extent the total county and city tax rate  
34 under this section would exceed ~~((three-tenths of one))~~ 0.3 percent.

35           (3) The tax authorized in this section is in addition to any  
36 other taxes authorized by law and must be collected from those  
37 persons who are taxable by the state under chapters 82.08 and 82.12  
38 RCW upon the occurrence of any taxable event within the county.

1 (4) The retail sale or use of motor vehicles, and the lease of  
2 motor vehicles for up to the first (~~(thirty-six)~~) 36 months of the  
3 lease, are exempt from tax imposed under this section.

4 (5) (~~(One-third)~~) (a) If the tax authorized under this section is  
5 imposed by a county or city with voter approval, one-third of all  
6 money received under this section must be used solely for criminal  
7 justice purposes, fire protection purposes, community protection  
8 purposes, or (~~(both)~~) public safety purposes, including but not  
9 limited to, behavioral health, co-responder, and diversion treatment  
10 programs and services. For the purposes of this subsection, "criminal  
11 justice purposes" (~~(has the same meaning as provided in RCW~~  
12 ~~82.14.340, except that from May 13, 2021, through December 31, 2023,~~  
13 ~~"criminal justice purposes"~~)) includes local government programs  
14 which have a reasonable relationship to reducing the numbers of  
15 people interacting with the criminal justice system including, but  
16 not limited to, reducing homelessness or improving behavioral health.

17 (b) If the tax authorized under this section is imposed by a  
18 county or city by ordinance or resolution without voter approval, all  
19 money received under this section must be used for the purposes  
20 described in (a) of this subsection.

21 (6) Money received by a county under subsection (1) of this  
22 section must be shared between the county and the cities as follows:  
23 60 percent must be retained by the county and 40 percent must be  
24 distributed on a per capita basis to cities in the county.

25 (7) Tax proceeds received by a city imposing a tax under this  
26 section must be shared between the county and city as follows: 15  
27 percent must be distributed to the county and 85 percent is retained  
28 by the city.

29 **Sec. 2.** RCW 82.14.340 and 2021 c 296 s 5 are each amended to  
30 read as follows:

31 (1) The legislative authority of any county may fix and impose a  
32 sales and use tax in accordance with the terms of this chapter,  
33 provided that such sales and use tax is subject to repeal by  
34 referendum, using the procedures provided in RCW 82.14.036. The  
35 referendum procedure provided in RCW 82.14.036 is the exclusive  
36 method for subjecting any county sales and use tax ordinance or  
37 resolution to a referendum vote.

38 (2) The tax authorized in this section is in addition to any  
39 other taxes authorized by law and must be collected from those

1 persons who are taxable by the state pursuant to chapters 82.08 and  
2 82.12 RCW upon the occurrence of any taxable event within such  
3 county. The rate of tax equals (~~one-tenth of one~~) 0.1 percent of  
4 the selling price (in the case of a sales tax) or value of the  
5 article used (in the case of a use tax).

6 (3) When distributing moneys collected under this section, the  
7 state treasurer must distribute 10 percent of the moneys to the  
8 county in which the tax was collected. The remainder of the moneys  
9 collected under this section must be distributed to the county and  
10 the cities within the county ratably based on population as last  
11 determined by the office of financial management. In making the  
12 distribution based on population, the county must receive that  
13 proportion that the unincorporated population of the county bears to  
14 the total population of the county and each city must receive that  
15 proportion that the city incorporated population bears to the total  
16 county population.

17 (4) Moneys received from any tax imposed under this section must  
18 be expended for criminal justice purposes. (~~Criminal justice~~  
19 ~~purposes are defined as~~) For purposes of this section, "criminal  
20 justice purposes" means activities that substantially assist the  
21 criminal justice system, (~~which may include~~) including co-responder  
22 and diversion treatment services and circumstances where ancillary  
23 benefit to the civil justice system occurs, and which includes  
24 domestic violence services such as those provided by domestic  
25 violence programs, community advocates, and legal advocates, as  
26 defined in RCW 70.123.020. After May 13, 2021, through December 31,  
27 2023, "criminal justice purposes" includes local government programs  
28 which have a reasonable relationship to reducing the numbers of  
29 people interacting with the criminal justice system including, but  
30 not limited to, reducing homelessness or improving behavioral health.

31 (5) In the expenditure of funds for criminal justice purposes as  
32 provided in this section, cities and counties, or any combination  
33 thereof, are expressly authorized to participate in agreements,  
34 pursuant to chapter 39.34 RCW, to jointly expend funds for criminal  
35 justice purposes of mutual benefit. Such criminal justice purposes of  
36 mutual benefit include, but are not limited to, the construction,  
37 improvement, and expansion of jails, court facilities, juvenile

1 justice facilities, and services with ancillary benefits to the civil  
2 justice system.

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