

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 2655

AS REPORTED BY COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS, FEBRUARY 24, 1992

Brief Description: Modifying municipal criminal justice account distribution.

SPONSORS: Representatives Haugen, Horn and Wang; by request of Task Force on City/County Finances

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators McDonald, Chairman; Craswell, Vice Chairman; Amondson, Bailey, Bauer, Bluechel, Cantu, Gaspard, Hayner, M. Kreidler, Metcalf, Murray, Newhouse, Niemi, Owen, Rinehart, Saling, L. Smith, Talmadge, Williams, and Wojahn.

Staff: Terry Wilson (786-7715)

Hearing Dates: February 20, 1992; February 24, 1992

BACKGROUND:

Cities that have a crime rate over 125 percent of the statewide average receive a distribution of motor vehicle excise taxes. Thirty percent of the funds are available for cities with crime rates over 200 percent of the statewide average crime rate, but no city may receive more than 50 percent of these funds. Remaining funds are then distributed to high crime cities with crime rates over 125 percent of the statewide average crime rate.

Because of the 50 percent limitation, the city of Seattle's funding is capped. The cap results in undistributed funds which have been distributed to cities in the 125 percent category.

An Attorney General's opinion in August 1991 stated that the excess funds should be distributed to the other cities in the 200 percent category rather than to the cities in the 125 percent category. The result is a significant increase in funding for two high crime cities in the 200 percent category, Pasco and Yakima, at the expense of 32 cities in the 125 percent category.

Additionally, due to improved crime rates, the cities of Wapato and Tacoma are no longer eligible for distributions from the funding provided for the 200 percent category.

SUMMARY:

The current statute is made consistent with the current distribution methods used by the State Treasurer for high crime cities.

Moneys not distributed under the 200 percent category because of the cap are distributed to cities in the 125 percent category.

In addition, the criteria of 200 percent of the statewide average crime rate is reduced to 175 percent. Ten cities will receive funding under this category. The five cities of Pasco, Seattle, Tacoma, Wapato, and Yakima will continue to receive funds under the 175 percent category, and the five cities of Elma, Moses Lake, Stanwood, Sunnyside, and Toppenish will begin to receive funds under the 175 percent category.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: available

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

TESTIMONY FOR: None

TESTIMONY AGAINST: None

TESTIFIED: No one