

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6475

AS OF JANUARY 31, 1994

Brief Description: Providing for transit police officers.

SPONSORS: Senators Vognild, Nelson and Winsley

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Staff: Gene Baxstrom (786-7303)

Hearing Dates: January 31, 1994

BACKGROUND:

A public transportation benefit area (PTBA) is a special purpose unit of government authorized to provide public transportation services. The boundaries of each of the 21 existing PTBAs include one or more cities and also include unincorporated areas in one or two counties. PTBAs are governed by a board of local elected officials.

PTBAs have no statutory authority to hire their own police officers to provide security on transit vehicles and at transit stations and other properties. Some transit agencies hire off-duty officers from county or city law enforcement agencies to provide security. Other PTBAs rely solely upon the county or city police force to respond to emergencies as they arise.

SUMMARY:

Public transportation benefit areas are granted authority to hire transit police officers to provide law enforcement and security for the operation of transit vehicles. These officers may also provide security on or about transit facilities and property. These officers must have successfully completed state required basic law enforcement training.

A transit police officer is a general authority police officer, empowered to enforce the state's traffic and criminal laws throughout the territorial boundaries of the state, so long as a mutual law enforcement assistance agreement has been signed, prior written consent given, or an emergency involving a threat to human life or property exists.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: none requested