

FINAL BILL REPORT

SHB 1596

C 89 L 01

Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Authorizing transportation for persons with special needs.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Representatives G. Chandler, Wood, Mulliken, Fisher, Mitchell, Ogden and Santos).

House Committee on Transportation
Senate Committee on Transportation

Background:

Several different units of government, including public transportation benefit areas and county transportation authorities, are authorized to provide public transportation services. There are presently 25 systems providing public transportation services in 26 counties of the state. All but two of these systems are funded through a voter approved local option sales tax.

State law is silent on whether a public transportation system can be for a specific class of users. The authorization for public transportation agencies, however, is for providing public transportation services to best serve the residents of the area. State law does provide that fares can be adjusted for specific routes, classes of service, or distinguishable classes of users.

Propositions to provide public transportation services in some areas have been turned down by voters. Some feel that there is majority support for providing services for only those persons with special needs. Persons with special needs are those who, because of physical or mental disability, income status, or age, cannot transport themselves.

Summary:

Specific authority is provided, allowing service to be provided to only those persons with special needs, for county transportation authorities established after January 1, 2001 and to public transportation benefit areas established after January 1, 2001 or which have not received voter approval for transit taxes.

The use of the sales tax for public transportation services provided by public transportation benefit areas and county transportation authorities is expanded, allowing it to be used for persons with special needs only.

Votes on Final Passage:

House 95 0
Senate 46 0

Effective: July 22, 2001