

SENATE BILL REPORT

ESSB 6464

As Passed Senate, February 18, 2002

Title: An act relating to city transportation authority.

Brief Description: Authorizing the creation of a city transportation authority.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Senators Jacobsen, Horn and Kohl-Welles).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Transportation: 2/5/02, 2/11/02 [DPS, DNP].

Passed Senate: 2/18/02, 26-23.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6464 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Haugen, Chair; Gardner, Vice Chair; Eide, Jacobsen, Kastama, Keiser, McAuliffe, Prentice, Shin and Swecker.

Minority Report: Do not pass.

Signed by Senators Finkbeiner, Horn, Johnson and McDonald.

Staff: Tami Neilson (786-7452)

Background: The original monorail runs for a mile between the Seattle Center and downtown Seattle. In 1997, voters in the city of Seattle approved a study of an expanded monorail system. In 2000, voters approved an initiative for the Elevated Transportation Company to develop a monorail expansion plan, which included \$6 million in funding. The city of Seattle also has a bus service that is run by King County Metro.

Summary of Bill: A city with a population over 300,000 can create a city transportation authority to perform a public monorail transportation function if a majority of voters within the city approves it. The authority can acquire public transportation facilities and may lease, construct, add to, improve, replace, repair, maintain, operate, and regulate the use of monorail facilities. It is authorized to fix rates, tolls, fares, and charges for the use of the monorail and may establish routes and classes of service. The authority area may not extend beyond the city and may be dissolved by a referendum of city voters if the authority is faced with significant financial problems.

The authority adopts a public transportation plan which must be approved by the city council and voters within the boundaries of the authority area.

To pay for and to implement the plan, the city public transportation authority may levy excess levies on property and issue revenue and general obligation bonds. Any number of the following taxes must also be approved by voters:

- “ An excise tax on the value of motor vehicles within the city not exceeding 2.5 percent.
- “ A sales and use tax on retail car rentals within the city not exceeding 1.944 percent of the base of the tax, if the motor vehicle excise tax is implemented.
- “ A vehicle relicensing tax not exceeding \$100 for each car within the city.
- “ Annual property tax levies of \$1.50 or less per thousand dollars of property value, in addition to existing property taxes.

If a regional transportation act is not enacted by December 31, 2002, this legislation is null and void; therefore, a city transportation authority could not be established.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: It would give taxing authority for the monorail, and it is approved by the voters. It is a Seattle project, paid for by Seattle voters.

Testimony Against: (Concerns) The MVET should be paid at the time of relicensing, not licensing one's car.

Testified: Senator Jacobsen, prime sponsor; Harold Robertson, Elevated Transportation Company; Jim Kelley, Elevated Transportation Company; Jim Boldt, Washington Auto Dealers.