

6140-S2

Sponsor(s): Senate Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Senators McDonald, Prentice, Horn, Eide, Johnson, Finkbeiner, Patterson, Shin, Benton, Kastama, Costa, McAuliffe, Rossi, Long, Roach, Zarelli and Oke)

Brief Description: Authorizing creation of regional transportation investment districts.

SB 6140-S2.E - DIGEST

(DIGEST AS ENACTED)

Finds that: (1) The capacity of many of Washington state's transportation facilities have failed to keep up with the state's growth, particularly in major urban regions;

(2) The state cannot by itself fund, in a timely way, many of the major capacity and other improvements required on highways of statewide significance in the state's largest urbanized area;

(3) Providing a transportation system that provides efficient mobility for persons and freight requires a shared partnership and responsibility between the state, local, and regional governments and the private sector; and

(4) Timely construction and development of significant transportation improvement projects can best be achieved through enhanced funding options for governments at the county and regional levels, using already existing tax authority to address roadway and multimodal needs and new authority for regions to address critical projects of statewide significance.

Declares that regional transportation investment district coordinating committees are advisory entities that are created, convened, and empowered as follows: (1) A county with a population over one million five hundred thousand persons and any adjoining counties with a population over five hundred thousand persons may create a regional transportation investment district and shall convene a regional transportation investment district coordinating committee.

Declares that the members of the legislative authorities participating in planning under this act shall serve as the district coordinating committee.

Provides that a regional transportation investment district coordinating committee shall adopt a regional transportation investment plan providing for the selection, development, construction, and financing of transportation projects. The regional transportation investment plan should consider land use planning.

Provides that a regional transportation investment district coordinating committee may, as part of a regional transportation investment plan, recommend the imposition of some or all of the following revenue sources, which a regional transportation investment district may impose upon approval of the voters as provided in this act: (1) A regional sales and use tax, as specified in section 504 of this act, of up to 0.5 percent of the selling price, in the case of a sales tax, or value of the article

used, in the case of a use tax, upon the occurrence of any taxable event in the regional transportation investment district;

(2) A local option vehicle license fee, as specified under section 508 of this act, of up to one hundred dollars per vehicle registered in the district;

(3) A parking tax under RCW 82.80.030;

(4) A local motor vehicle excise tax under RCW 81.100.060;

(5) A local option fuel tax under RCW 82.80.010;

(6) An employer excise tax under RCW 81.100.030; and

(7) Vehicle tolls, but only on new facilities.

Provides that two or more contiguous county legislative authorities, upon receipt of the regional transportation investment plan under this act, may certify the plan to the ballot, including identification of the tax options necessary to fund the plan, unless fifty percent of the number of cities and towns within the district representing a minimum of fifty percent of the cities' and towns' population, by action of the cities' and towns' legislative authorities, disapprove the plan within thirty calendar days.

Provides that, if the voters approve the plan, including creation of a regional transportation investment district and imposition of taxes and fees, the district will be declared formed.

Declares that it is the intent of the legislature that administrative and overhead costs of a regional transportation investment district be minimized.

Authorizes a district to use the design-build procedure for projects developed by it.

Requires the department to designate an office or division of dedicated staff and services whose primary responsibility is to coordinate the design, preliminary engineering, permitting, financing, and construction of projects under consideration by a regional transportation investment district coordinating committee or that are part of a regional transportation investment plan being implemented by a regional transportation investment district.

Finds that regional solutions to the state's transportation needs are of paramount concern.

Recognizes that different areas of the state will need the flexibility to fashion local solutions to their transportation problems, and that regional transportation systems may evolve over time. Areas of the state outside of King, Snohomish, and Pierce counties are eligible for grants from the state of no more than one hundred fifty thousand dollars to study and develop regional transportation models.

Provides that, at the option of the coordinating committee, and with the explicit approval of the regional transit authority, the participating counties may choose to impose any remaining high capacity transportation taxes under chapter 81.104 RCW that have not otherwise been used by a regional transit authority and submit to the voters a common ballot measure that creates the district, approves the regional transportation investment plan, implements the taxes, and implements any remaining high capacity transportation taxes within the boundaries of the regional transportation investment district.

Finds that there is a need for large cities, with populations of five hundred thousand or more, at their option, to develop,

construct, and operate intracity monorail systems within their boundaries to facilitate the movement of people and mitigate traffic congestion in highly urbanized areas.

Provides that, if approved by the majority of the voters within its boundaries voting on the ballot proposition, a regional transportation investment district may impose a sales and use tax of up to 0.5 percent of the selling price or value of the article used in the case of a use tax. The tax authorized by this provision is in addition to the tax authorized by RCW 82.14.030 and must be collected from those persons who are taxable by the state under chapters 82.08 and 82.12 RCW upon the occurrence of any taxable event within the taxing district.

Provides that motor vehicles, as defined in RCW 46.04.320, are exempt from the sales and use tax imposed under this provision.

Provides that, upon approval of a majority of the voters within its boundaries voting on the ballot proposition, a regional transportation investment district may set and impose an annual local option vehicle license fee of a uniform amount of up to one hundred dollars per motor vehicle registered within the boundaries of the region on every motor vehicle, as defined in RCW 46.04.320.

Provides that, upon approval of a majority of the voters within its boundaries voting on the ballot proposition, and only for the purposes authorized in section 105(1)(g) of this act, a regional transportation investment district may impose vehicle tolls on state routes where improvements financed in whole or in part by a regional transportation investment district add additional lanes to a highway of statewide significance.

Declares that regional transportation investment districts and their powers and duties are terminated on June 30, 2006. However, nothing in this provision may be construed as impairing a district created before June 30, 2006, from continuing to collect approved revenues and make payment on projects or debt incurred.

VETO MESSAGE ON SB 6140-S2

March 21, 2002

To the Honorable President and Members,
The Senate of the State of Washington
Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am returning herewith, without my approval as to section 504, Engrossed Second Substitute Senate Bill No. 6140 entitled:
"AN ACT Relating to the creation of regional transportation investment districts;"

Engrossed Second Substitute Senate Bill No. 6140 allows voters of the three central Puget Sound counties to adopt a transportation funding and investment plan for their region. Section 504 would have rendered the entire bill - and perhaps even a majority vote in the region - null and void if a statewide transportation act containing new revenue does not become law by December 31, 2002. A statewide transportation act has been referred to the ballot for November 2002.

Section 504 of the bill creates legal issues that could thwart any transportation solution that the voters may approve. By vetoing this section, the three central Puget Sound counties will

retain a dynamic new tool to begin to address their most pressing transportation needs, regardless of the outcome of the statewide referendum. The three central Puget Sound counties are major contributors to our state's economy, yet this same area suffers from some of the worst traffic congestion in the country. It should not be restrained from moving forward on its own if the rest of the state is unwilling.

Make no mistake, however: I pledge to work vigorously for the passage of the statewide transportation referendum. Even if the central Puget Sound region employs all of the new revenue authority provided by this bill, it is only a part of the solution. Statewide revenues are still essential for these three counties, as well as the rest of the state.

In addition, I will continue to work with the Legislature to expand the regional transportation funding authority, created by this bill, to other regions of our state.

For these reasons, I have vetoed section 504 of Engrossed Second Substitute Senate Bill No. 6140.

With the exception of section 504, Engrossed Second Substitute Senate Bill No. 6140 is approved.

Respectfully submitted,
Gary Locke
Governor