
Finance Committee

HB 1879

Brief Description: Coordinating the state collection and administration of sales and use taxes imposed by tribal municipalities.

Sponsors: Representatives Gombosky and Cairnes.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Permits the Department of Revenue to administer and collect a tribal sales tax in Quil-Ceda Village on the Tulalip Reservation.

Hearing Date: 2/25/03

Staff: Bob Longman (786-7139).

Background:

Federally recognized Indian Tribes have the authority to impose taxes, including taxes on the activities of nonIndians who are on tribal trust land. Trust land is land held by the federal government in trust for a tribe and under the jurisdiction of the tribal government. The authority of tribes to impose taxes is entirely a matter of federal law.

Generally speaking, state and local governments also have the authority to impose taxes on the activities of nonIndians who are on tribal trust land. For example, nontribal businesses on tribal land must collect state and local retail sales tax in addition to any tribal sales tax. The state retail sales tax rate is 6.5 percent. Additional local sales taxes are imposed by cities, counties, and transit districts. Local sales tax rates currently range from 0.5 percent to 2.4 percent, depending on location. The maximum sales tax rate for a city is 1 percent. If both a city and a county impose sales taxes, the county tax is reduced by the amount of the city tax and the county gets 15 percent of the revenue from the city tax. Local sales taxes are administered by the Department of Revenue (Department). A retailer collects sales tax from customers at a single rate and remits the total state and local sales tax to the Department. The Department distributes the local sales taxes to the local governments that impose sales taxes. None of these rate limits or collection and distribution procedures apply to tribal taxes.

The Board of Directors of the Tulalip Tribes has created a municipality within the Tulalip

Reservation in Snohomish county. The municipality is known as Quil-Ceda Village. The village has developed a business park which includes several major retailers. The tribe has indicated it intends to impose a tribal tax on retail sales in the village.

Summary of Bill:

Quil-Ceda Village is defined as a city for the purposes of collection and distribution of local sales taxes. The Department of Revenue may enter into an interlocal cooperation agreement with any Indian tribe that has a city. The agreement would permit the Department to administer and collect a tribal sales tax in the city. Under the agreement, tribal sales tax definitions must be uniform with state and local sales tax definitions, the tribal tax rate must be no greater than the rate allowed cities under state law, and the tribe must agree to provide the county with the same percentage of its tax that the county would get from a city tax imposed under state law. The agreement may also cover additional areas of tax administration, including audit and compliance, as may be required to simplify tax administration and tax reporting.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 19, 2003.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.