

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 3068

As Reported by House Committee On:
Transportation

Title: An act relating to high-capacity transportation service.

Brief Description: Establishing high-capacity transportation corridor areas.

Sponsors: Representatives Clibborn, Fromhold, Moeller, Appleton, Roberts and Wood.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Transportation: 2/4/08, 2/8/08 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Authorizes certain transit agencies to create one or more new taxing districts within its boundaries for the purpose of establishing, financing, and operating high capacity transportation (HCT) services.
- For purposes of establishing a HCT subdistrict, the definition of a HCT system is expanded to include passenger-only ferry service.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 18 members: Representatives Clibborn, Chair; Flannigan, Vice Chair; Appleton, Campbell, Dickerson, Eddy, Hudgins, Jarrett, Loomis, Rolfes, Sells, Simpson, Springer, Takko, Upthegrove, Wallace, Williams and Wood.

Staff: Kathryn Leathers (786-7114).

Background:

In the central Puget Sound region, high capacity transportation systems may be established and financed by a regional transit authority or a regional transportation investment district. Outside of the central Puget Sound region, high capacity transportation systems may be established only in Clark, Spokane, Thurston, Whatcom, and Yakima counties, by city-

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owned transits, county transportation authorities, metropolitan municipal corporations, and public transportation benefit areas.

High capacity transportation service means a system of public transportation services within an urbanized region operating principally on exclusive rights of way, and the supporting services and facilities necessary to implement the system, including interim express services and high occupancy vehicle lanes, which, taken as a whole, provides a substantially higher level of passenger capacity, speed, and service frequency than traditional public transportation systems operating principally in general purpose roadways.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

Certain transit agencies are authorized to create one or more special purpose districts (subdistrict) within their existing boundaries for the purpose of establishing, financing, and operating high capacity transportation (HCT) services.

The transit agencies authorized to create one or more HCT subdistricts are city-owned transits, county transportation authorities, metropolitan municipal corporations, and public transportation benefit areas that serve a population area of greater than 100,000. Creation of a HCT subdistrict is prohibited in King, Pierce, and Snohomish counties. The boundaries of a HCT subdistrict may include all or a portion of the boundaries of the transit agency, and may include all or a portion of a town or city within the transit agency's boundaries.

A HCT subdistrict is governed by the existing governing body of the transit agency authorized to create the subdistrict, and it possesses the same taxing authority as is available to any agency authorized to establish and finance a HCT system, which includes: (a) an employee tax of up to \$2 per month per employee; (b) rental car sales and use tax not to exceed 2.172 percent; and (c) sales and use tax not to exceed 0.9 percent. Taxes imposed for HCT purposes are in addition to taxes permitted to be imposed by a transit agency for other public transportation purposes. If multiple HCT subdistricts are created in a single area, only one full set of HCT taxes may be imposed. All taxes require voter approval.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The number of transit agencies authorized to create a high capacity transportation district is expanded. Authorized transit agencies are defined by the size of their service population area instead of the population size of the county or counties in which they are located. For the purpose of establishing a high capacity transportation subdistrict, the definition of a high capacity transportation system is expanded to include passenger-only ferry service.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date of Substitute Bill: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) This bill creates local solutions for local projects. It also addresses equity issues by enabling a community to target and focus on key corridors, thereby enabling a local jurisdiction to only ask citizens who would benefit from high capacity transportation services to pay for them. The population threshold requirement should be lowered so that more communities can take advantage of this tool to address congestion needs.

(Opposed): None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Clibborn, prime sponsor; Scott Patterson, C-TRAN; Josh Brown, Kitsap Transit; and Peter Thein, Washington State Transit Association.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.