

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6495

As of February 7, 2008

Title: An act relating to requiring the appointment of nonvoting labor members to public transportation governing bodies.

Brief Description: Requiring the appointment of nonvoting labor members to public transportation governing bodies.

Sponsors: Senators McDermott, Marr, Fairley, Pridemore and Kline.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Transportation: 2/05/08.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Staff: Kelly Simpson (786-7403)

Background: Under current law, the various local transit systems have different governing bodies specified in statute. Generally, transit system governing bodies are composed of local county and city elected officials from within the transit system area. In some cases, citizen members sit on transit system governing bodies.

Summary of Bill: Any public transportation system governing body must include one nonvoting member recommended by the labor organization representing a majority of the public transportation employees within the respective area.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: The union membership of transit agencies offers a different perspective than does management. Transit operators should have some say concerning transit agency operations. Union membership are not asking for a voting role on transit boards. Transit boards would benefit from hearing a different voice during their deliberations, as public testimony is typically not considered prior to a board vote. The bill would not change existing labor/management relationships.

CON: This bill is not needed, as many federal and state provisions exist to protect union interests. Transit management frequently solicits union input. The bill upsets the current

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system, damaging management/labor relationships. A better idea would be to encourage collaboration between the two parties. Finally, it is not a good idea to give certain employee groups a seat on the board and not others.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Dennis Antonellis, ATU 1015; Karen Stites, ATU 1765.

CON: Mike Harbour, Intercity Transit; Dave Turissini, Jefferson Transit.