

SENATE BILL REPORT

EHB 1171

As of March 28, 2011

Title: An act relating to high capacity transportation system plan components and review.

Brief Description: Concerning high capacity transportation system plan components and review.

Sponsors: Representatives Rolfes, Armstrong, Liias, Billig, Angel, Finn, Appleton, Seaquist and Reykdal.

Brief History: Passed House: 3/03/11, 54-44.

Committee Activity: Transportation: 3/28/11.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Staff: Amanda Cecil (786-7429)

Background: A high capacity transportation (HCT) service is a system of public transportation services in an urbanized region operating primarily on exclusive right-of-way, including high occupancy vehicle lanes, which provides a substantially higher level of passenger capacity, speed, and service frequency than traditional public transportation systems.

In addition to other planning requirements, the local authority establishing an HCT must develop a system and financing plan, and must provide for public involvement. In addition, an expert review panel must be appointed to provide independent technical review for development of any plan which is to be funded in whole or part by HCT voter-approved taxes. The state's role in HCT planning is to facilitate cooperative state and local planning efforts, and to provide system and project planning review and monitoring in cooperation with the expert review panel.

In general, transit agencies are authorized to impose a sales and use tax of up to 0.9 percent with voter approval for the purpose of funding public transportation services. In addition, a transit agency with an HCT system may impose, with voter approval, the following measures:

- an employer tax up to \$2 per month per employee;
- rental car sales and use tax not to exceed 2.172 percent; and
- sales and use tax not to exceed 0.9 percent.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Summary of Bill: The planning process and expert review panel process required of local authorities seeking to implement a high capacity transportation system is limited to systems where the plan includes a rail fixed guideway component or a bus rapid transit component that is part of a regional transit authority's plan.

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 planning and expert review panel process called out in law are expensive to conduct and duplicative with existing planning requirements. This will allow local agencies to implement high capacity transit faster and for less cost.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Representative Rolfes, prime sponsor; Dylan Doty, Kitsap Transit.