

HOUSE BILL REPORT

ESHB 2111

As Passed House:
February 13, 2014

Title: An act relating to the enforcement of regional transit authority fares.

Brief Description: Concerning the enforcement of regional transit authority fares.

Sponsors: House Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Representatives Farrell, Hayes, Fey, Rodne, Zeiger, Fitzgibbon, Morrell, Jinkins, Moscoso, Ryu and Freeman).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Transportation: 1/21/14, 1/29/14, 1/30/14 [DPS].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 2/13/14, 97-0.

Brief Summary of Engrossed Substitute Bill

- Requires a citation issued by a regional transit authority (RTA) for failure to provide proof of payment to be approved, as to form, by the Administrative Office of the Courts in the same manner as for parking, standing, and stopping infractions.
- Removes the requirement that a citation issued by a RTA conform to the general requirements for a notice of civil infractions.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 25 members: Representatives Clibborn, Chair; Farrell, Vice Chair; Fey, Vice Chair; Moscoso, Vice Chair; Hargrove, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Bergquist, Fitzgibbon, Freeman, Habib, Hawkins, Hayes, Klippert, Kochmar, Moeller, Morris, Muri, Ortiz-Self, Pike, Riccelli, Ryu, Sells, Takko, Tarleton, Walkinshaw and Zeiger.

Minority Report: Without recommendation. Signed by 5 members: Representatives Orcutt, Ranking Minority Member; Overstreet, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Johnson, Shea and Young.

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.

Staff: David Munnecke (786-7315).

Background:

Regional transit authorities (RTAs) are authorized to set fines and penalties for civil infractions established under the RTA statute. Fines established by a RTA may not exceed the amount established in statute for a class 1 civil infraction, which is currently \$250, before the addition of any statutory assessments, except in certain circumstances. A RTA may issue a civil infraction only for those prohibited activities included in the RTA statutes, which include: failure to pay the required fare; failure to display proof of payment when requested to do so by an authorized RTA employee; and failure to leave a facility when requested to do so by an individual authorized to monitor fare payment.

Summary of Engrossed Substitute Bill:

The citation form issued by a RTA for failure to provide proof of payment is required to be approved by the Administrative Office of the Courts in the same manner as for parking, standing, and stopping infractions.

The requirement that a citation issued by a RTA conform to the general requirements for a notice of civil infractions is removed.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not Requested.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) Sound Transit is assuming a significant increase in ridership will occur over the next several years, and this bill would allow for better fare enforcement in that context. The bill would also save Sound Transit over \$1 million in the next several years through more efficient operations, which will thus save taxpayer dollars.

Sound Transit carried 12.2 million passengers on its trains in 2012 and expects to carry more than 14 million by 2016. There are currently 25 enforcement officers tasked with insuring that fares are paid. These officers spend 2.7 hours per day doing paperwork for tickets and the courts do even more.

The courts have already requested that tickets be served directly on fare evaders, and this bill would allow that to happen by using electronic ticket machines. However, the standard form for tickets cannot be produced by these machines. This bill would allow the Administrative Office of the Courts to approve the form of the tickets, which would be the same as for other tickets except for the absence of information related to vehicles.

This bill will save \$1.5 million over 5 years, and the time saved is the equivalent of two more enforcement officers.

(With concerns) There is a structure in place to create a standard form for infractions. This helps the public to understand infractions and insures that the form meets constitutional requirements.

This bill would start a process where other entities would ask for similar treatment. The courts want to be sure that infractions meet the necessary standards.

(Opposed) Transit agencies are run to lose money and receive federal funds. A system needs to be created that people want to ride.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Representative Farrell, prime sponsor; and Desmond Brown, Sound Transit.

(With concerns) Sam Meyer, District and Municipal Court Judges Association.

(Opposed) Paul Locke.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.