

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5093

As of February 5, 2013

Title: An act relating to a transportation benefit district vehicle fee.

Brief Description: Concerning a transportation benefit district vehicle fee.

Sponsors: Senators Benton and Roach.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Transportation: 1/30/13.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Staff: Amanda Cecil (786-7429)

Background: A transportation benefit district (TBD) is a quasi-municipal corporation and independent taxing authority that may be established by a county or city for the purpose of funding transportation improvements within the district. Transportation improvements can include investments in city streets, county roads, new or existing highways of statewide significance, principal arterials of regional significance, high capacity transportation, and public transportation. A TBD may include areas within one or more county, city, port district, county transportation authority, or public transportation benefit area. A TBD is authorized to impose various taxes and fees to fund transportation improvements, including a vehicle fee of up to \$20.00 per vehicle with approval of a majority of the governing board or up to \$100.00 per vehicle with approval of a majority of the voters in the district.

The Washington State Constitution restricts the use of various transportation taxes and fees for highway purposes, including the construction, maintenance and operations of public highways, county roads, bridges, and city streets. Case law has generally construed highway purposes to exclude public transportation and other purposes not directly benefiting highway users.

Summary of Bill: A vehicle fee imposed by the governing board of a TBD after January 1, 2013, must only be used for highway purposes.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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.

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: This lessens the burden on transportation funds that need to be used for roads and conforms to the intent of the 18th amendment of the state's constitution.

CON: This is a local option funding source and it should retain the flexibility to be used for broader transportation purposes at local discretion. There are already too many taxes and fees and this will not help.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Benton, prime sponsor; Mike Burgess, Clark County.

CON: Paul Montage, Identity Clark County; Michael Shaw, WA State Transit Assn.; Cody Arledge, Transportation Choices Coalition; Paul Locke, citizen; Alison Hellberg, Assn. of WA Cities; April Putney, Futurewise.