

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1279

As Reported by House Committee On:
Community Development, Housing & Tribal Affairs

Title: An act relating to local tourism promotion areas.

Brief Description: Modifying the definition of legislative authority for purposes of local tourism promotion areas.

Sponsors: Representatives Kochmar and Gregory.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Community Development, Housing & Tribal Affairs: 1/26/15, 2/2/15 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Eliminates the requirement that certain cities in a county with a population of 1 million or more act jointly for purposes of establishing and operating tourism promotion areas.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, HOUSING & TRIBAL AFFAIRS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 7 members: Representatives Appleton, Chair; Robinson, Vice Chair; Johnson, Ranking Minority Member; Zeiger, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Hawkins, Sawyer and Van De Wege.

Staff: Kirsten Lee (786-7133).

Background:

In 2003 the Legislature authorized the creation of tourism promotion areas. Legislative authorities of counties with populations between 40,000 and 1 million, and all incorporated cities and towns located in such counties, were authorized to establish tourism promotion areas and impose a charge on lodging to increase tourism and conventions within such areas. A fee may be assessed on lodging businesses of up to \$2 per night of stay. Funding must be used for advertising, publicizing, or otherwise distributing information to attract and

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welcome tourists, and operating tourism destination marketing organizations, to increase convention and tourism business.

In 2009 tourism promotion areas in a county with a population of 1 million or more were authorized. A "legislative authority" for such a county is two or more jurisdictions acting under an interlocal agreement to jointly establish and operate a tourism promotion area.

Summary of Bill:

The requirement for jurisdictions within a county with a population of 1 million or more to act jointly for the purposes of establishing and operating a tourism promotion area is eliminated for cities incorporated after January 1990 with a population greater than 89,000. The "legislative authority" for these cities is the city's legislative authority.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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) The city of Federal Way cannot use the existing tourism promotion area tool, unless it is in partnership with another city. The city has a robust hotel sector and is distinct from other cities because it has an arts industry, so it is important to establish a tourism promotion area. At this time, there are no cities adjacent to Federal Way that are interested in joining the city to establish a tourism promotion area.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Kochmar, prime sponsor; and Jeanne Burbidge, City of Federal Way.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.