SENATE BILL REPORT
HB 2918

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Government Operations & Security, February 22, 2016

Title: An act relating to granting a city or town the authority to establish and operate a traffic school without county consent, control, or supervision.

Brief Description: Granting a city or town the authority to establish and operate a traffic school without county consent, control, or supervision.

Sponsors: Representatives Gregerson, Pike, Moscoso, Orwall, Robinson, Hudgins, Van De Wege, Appleton, Stanford and Goodman.

Brief History: Passed House: 2/11/16, 87-9.
    Committee Activity: Government Operations & Security: 2/22/16, 2/22/16 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & SECURITY

Majority Report: Do pass.
    Signed by Senators Roach, Chair; Pearson, Vice Chair; Habib, McCoy and Takko.

Staff: Alex Kearns (786-7416)

Background: A city or town and the county in which that city or town is located may establish a traffic school by agreement, for the purpose of instructing individuals on the lawful and safe operation of motor vehicles. To form a traffic school, a city or town must pass an ordinance and the respective county must pass a resolution, outlining the financing, organization, and operation details for the traffic school on which the two municipalities have agreed.

The county board of commissioners has the authority to control and supervise a traffic school and to administer the funds for a traffic school located within the county limits. The governing authority of a city or town may make appropriations for the establishment and operation of a traffic school. However, all funds appropriated for the operation of the traffic school must be deposited with the county treasurer and administered by the county board of commissioners.

Summary of Bill: Cities, towns, and counties are authorized to establish traffic schools separately, by ordinance or resolution, without forming an agreement. A traffic school

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established by a city, town, or county is under the control and supervision of the governing body that established it. All funds appropriated by a city, town, or county for the operation of a traffic school are deposited with that jurisdiction's treasurer and are administered by the governing body of that jurisdiction.

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: There were 4400 traffic infractions in the City of SeaTac, from 2013 to 2015. SeaTac wanted to start a traffic school to give offenders another way to learn about the law, however they found that the county had to be the authorizing body and it was hard to establish that authority. Additionally, if the city established a traffic school the county could request any revenue in excess of the costs incurred providing the school, even though the county had no involvement. Many cities that had traffic schools no longer have them, so it is getting harder to get community members to a school close by. Traffic schools benefits drivers by keeping their records clean and keeping their insurance costs from going up. They also benefit the cities because they allow cities to keep their drivers informed of the laws and to increase compliance. Traffic schools additionally benefit the courts because they reduce the number of court challenges, and they benefit police departments by reducing officer court time, increasing adherence to traffic laws, and acting as a potential source of funding for traffic safety efforts.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Representative Gregerson, Prime Sponsor; Annette Louie, SeaTac Police Captain.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.