

Finance Committee

HB 2627

Brief Description: Concerning authorizations of proposals for emergency medical care and service levies.

Sponsors: Representatives Springer and Stokesbary.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Permits organizations to levy an EMS levy, if the organization is composed exclusively of taxing districts currently permitted to impose an EMS levy.
- Permits taxing districts to continue an existing levy with simple majority ballot approval, regardless of whether the tax rate changes.
- Requires approval from at least three-fifths of specified taxing districts in order to place a countywide levy on a ballot.

Hearing Date: 1/23/18

Staff: Richelle Geiger (786-7139).

Background:

Emergency Medical Service Levy.

An emergency medical service (EMS) levy is a regular voter-approved property tax levy used to provide emergency medical care or services. An EMS levy may be authorized for six years, 10 years, or permanently. An EMS levy must be approved by 60 percent of registered voters when the voter turnout exceeds 40 percent of the voter turnout at the last general election. When the turnout is less than 40 percent of voter turnout at the last general election, the "yes" votes must exceed 24 percent of the total number of votes in the last general election. If approved, a taxing district can impose a regular property tax levy at a rate not to exceed 50 cents per \$1,000 assessed value.

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.

Taxing districts that are permitted to seek authorization for a levy are counties, emergency medical service districts, cities or towns, public hospital districts, urban emergency medical service districts, regional fire protection authorities, and fire protection districts.

The uninterrupted continuation of a six-year or 10-year EMS levy that has a maximum levy rate the same as or lower than the prior voter-approved levy requires simple majority voter approval. If the maximum tax rate is higher than the prior voter-approved levy, the levy requires supermajority voter approval.

A countywide levy proposal may not be placed on a ballot without approval of the legislative authority of every city in the county that has a population in excess of 50,000.

Summary of Bill:

Organizations are permitted to impose an EMS levy if the organization is composed exclusively of taxing districts currently permitted to impose an EMS levy.

Taxing districts are permitted to continue an existing six-year or 10-year levy with simple majority ballot approval, regardless of whether the tax rate increases, decreases, or remains the same.

In order to include a countywide EMS levy on a ballot, three-fifths supermajority approval is required from the legislative authority of all taxing districts in a county with a population greater than 50,000 that provides emergency medical services reimbursable under the countywide levy.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Preliminary fiscal note available.

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