

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 1321

As of March 10, 2017

Title: An act relating to authorizing certain public facilities districts to acquire, construct, own, remodel, maintain, equip, reequip, repair, finance, and operate one or more recreational facilities other than a ski area with voter approval.

Brief Description: Authorizing certain public facilities districts to acquire, construct, own, remodel, maintain, equip, reequip, repair, finance, and operate one or more recreational facilities other than a ski area with voter approval.

Sponsors: House Committee on Local Government (originally sponsored by Representatives Jenkin, Appleton, Nealey and Gregerson).

Brief History: Passed House: 3/01/17, 86-12.

Committee Activity: Local Government: 3/09/17.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Modifies the definition of regional centers to include aquatics facilities.
- Eliminates the authority that allowed certain public facilities districts (PFDs) to own and operate recreational facilities.
- Limits certain PFDs from making facilities available to prospective users for events not open to the public, if reasonably comparable private facilities are available within the district.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Staff: Alex Fairfortune (786-7416)

Background: A public facilities district (PFD) is a municipal corporation authorized to own and operate regional centers, including convention, conference, and special event centers. A PFD is governed by an appointed board of directors, and may impose taxes and charge fees for the use of its facilities.

The legislative authority of a city or town located in a county with fewer than 1 million people may create a PFD by resolution. In addition, any three cities or towns with

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contiguous borders that have already each formed a local PFD may form another regional PFD by agreement, so long as their combined population is at least 160,000 people. The regional PFD and local PFDs may exist and operate fully within the same geographic area.

In addition to regional centers, a regional PFD created by a group of three contiguous cities or towns is also authorized to acquire and operate recreational facilities, not including ski areas.

Summary of Bill: The definition of a regional center is amended to include aquatics facilities. As a result, all PFDs are authorized to acquire, construct, own, and operate aquatics facilities.

The authority that permitted regional PFDs, created by a group of three contiguous cities or towns, to own and operate recreational facilities is eliminated.

A PFD, if created by a city bordered by both the Columbia and Snake Rivers, may not make any facility constructed after the effective date of the act available for an event that is not open to the public if reasonably comparable private facilities are available within the district. The facilities may only include equipment, amenities, and operations directly related to the primary function of the facility. This limitation does not apply to in-house daycare, gift shops, and food and beverage concessions.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: There have been a number of efforts to get an aquatics facility in Pasco. The Tri-Cities regional PFD proposed the issue to voters, and the vote failed in Kennewick and Richland while passing in Pasco. The desire among Pasco citizens remains unabated, but there is no way to satisfy that demand. The Pasco PFD needs the authority to ask voters for funding to establish an aquatics facility. The aquatics facility would greatly enhance the tourism industry and promote economic growth by drawing visitors who will stay for longer periods of time.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Representative Bill Jenkin, Prime Sponsor; Matt Watkins, Mayor, City of Pasco; Hector Cruz, Vice President, Visit Tri-Cities Sports Council; Craig Maloney, Treasurer, Pasco PFD Board; Justin Jones, Pasco Resident; Stan Strebels, City of Pasco.

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