

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 2627

As of February 23, 2018

Title: An act relating to authorizations of proposals for emergency medical care and service levies.

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

Sponsors: House Committee on Finance (originally sponsored by Representatives Springer and Stokesbary).

Brief History: Passed House: 2/12/18, 63-34.

Committee Activity: Ways & Means: 2/24/18.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Permits taxing districts to continue an existing emergency medical services (EMS) levy with simple majority ballot approval, regardless of whether the tax rate changes.
- Changes the large-city approval requirement for countywide EMS levies from 100 percent to 75 percent.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Staff: Jeffrey Mitchell (786-7438)

Background: An 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, ten years, or permanently. An EMS levy must be initially 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.

Taxing districts that are permitted to seek authorization for an EMS levy are counties, emergency medical service districts, cities or towns, public hospital districts, urban

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.

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: 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 place a countywide EMS levy on a ballot, the requirement that 100 percent of the cities with a population greater than 50,000 must approve the ballot proposition is changed to 75 percent.

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.