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SENATE BILL 5906

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State of Washington                      65th Legislature                      2017 Regular Session

By Senators Saldaña, Palumbo, Wellman, Lias, Hobbs, Conway,  
Darneille, and Keiser

Read first time 03/22/17. Referred to Committee on Transportation.

1            AN ACT Relating to establishing a regional transit authority  
2 rebate program for low-income individuals; adding a new section to  
3 chapter 81.112 RCW; creating a new section; and declaring an  
4 emergency.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

6            NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 1.** The recent voter-approved sound transit 3  
7 initiative will provide congestion relief and mobility choices for  
8 residents throughout the Puget Sound region. However, these  
9 investments will come at a cost to those who may be least able to  
10 afford an increased vehicle or property tax. The legislature finds  
11 that it is necessary to strike a balance between collecting the  
12 voter-approved revenue necessary to ensure the on-time and on-budget  
13 delivery of the regional light rail system and the burden of  
14 increased motor vehicle taxes on our lower-income Washingtonians. To  
15 achieve this goal, sound transit, like certain transportation benefit  
16 districts, should create a low-income rebate program to provide a  
17 rebate to eligible vehicle and home owners in the sound transit  
18 taxing district.

19            NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 81.112  
20 RCW to read as follows:

1 (1)(a) A regional transit authority that includes a county with a  
2 population of more than one million five hundred thousand may  
3 establish a rebate program for the purpose of providing rebates of up  
4 to forty percent of the motor vehicle excise tax or property tax, or  
5 both, paid by a low-income individual.

6 (b) A rebate for property taxes may only be provided to a low-  
7 income individual who qualifies for an exemption from property taxes  
8 pursuant to RCW 84.36.381.

9 (c) For purposes of this subsection, "low-income individual"  
10 means a single person, family, or unrelated persons living together  
11 whose income is at or below eighty percent of the median income,  
12 adjusted for family size, for the county in which they reside.

13 (2) Funds collected from a motor vehicle excise tax under RCW  
14 81.104.160, a sales and use tax under RCW 81.104.170, or property tax  
15 under RCW 81.104.175 may be used for a rebate program established  
16 under this section.

17 (3) A regional transit authority that establishes a rebate  
18 program is responsible for the development of the program and must  
19 work with the department of licensing regarding the administration,  
20 functions, and costs associated with the rebate program.

21 (4) A regional transit authority that establishes a rebate  
22 program under this section must report back to the legislature two  
23 years after the program takes effect. The report must include, but is  
24 not limited to, a detailed description of the structure of the  
25 program, the average rebate, the total amount of rebates issued, and  
26 the number of people that received rebates.

27 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** This act is necessary for the immediate  
28 preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of  
29 the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes  
30 effect immediately.

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