

PRELIMINARY STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Joint Committee On Ways and Means

Fiscal: No fiscal impact
Revenue: Has minimal revenue impact

Action Date:

Action:

Meeting Dates:

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WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Increases maximum allowable weight for vehicles equipped with fully functional idle reduction systems and vehicles that use natural gas as a fuel source. Specifies that a transit district may use certain sources of funds for a secondary transit supportive system.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- TriMet's use of bond proceeds and federal funds
- Public's satisfaction with TriMet's services

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:

Adds an additional authorizing statute for revenue bonds that can be issued by a local transit district; and clarifies the type of bond proceeds that may be used for construction, improvement, repair, maintenance, operation, and use of secondary transit supportive systems.

BACKGROUND:

The Tri-County Metropolitan Transportation District (TriMet) is the state's largest provider of public transit services. Serving the urbanized Portland metropolitan area, TriMet provides approximately 82 percent of the total number of public transit trips in Oregon, operating a fleet of more than 800 transit vehicles on 79 bus lines, five light rail lines, one commuter rail line and a special transportation system for persons with disabilities. Currently, TriMet is statutorily authorized to invest in a wide variety of transportation facilities on routes where it operates, including sidewalks, roads, highways, bike paths and others; however, the agency is not permitted to spend funds on transportation facilities on which it does not physically operate, except funds that are restricted exclusively for highway right of way, such as gas tax revenues. The agency is currently considering initiatives that would provide moneys to invest on transportation facilities throughout the Portland region; Senate Bill 1510 provides statutory authorization for TriMet to expend certain funds, such as the proceeds of general obligation bonds, grants and contributions, or the proceeds of bonds that are subject to a reimbursement, on transportation facilities on which it does not physically operate. All other sources of funding, including payroll taxes, would be prohibited for use on such projects.

The federal Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act, or "FAST Act," was signed into law in December 2015, becoming the first long-term federal transportation funding bill in over a decade. In addition to funding provisions, the FAST Act included provisions that increased maximum allowable weights for trucks that include certain equipment, such as idle systems or natural gas fuel systems. Senate Bill 1510 adjusts the maximum vehicle weights in Oregon statute to align with the new federal standards.