



Legislation Text

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Clerk 03/29/2012

AN ORDINANCE relating to public transportation; proposing a two-year congestion reduction transit incentives program; and amending Ordinance 12643, Section 18, and K.C.C. 4.150.610, Ordinance 12643, Section 19, as amended, and K.C.C. 4.150.210, Ordinance 12643, Section 18, as amended, and K.C.C. 4.150.610 and Ordinance 12643, Section 19, as amended, and K.C.C. 4.150.210.

STATEMENT OF FACTS:

1. In August 2011, the King County council approved Ordinance 17169, providing for a temporary two-year congestion reduction charge of twenty dollars on vehicle registration renewals to allow the transit division ("Metro Transit") to continue to provide the current level of transit service that helps reduce congestion and the corresponding burdens placed on local roads and highways. Proceeds from the charge will reduce congestion by enabling Metro Transit to maintain service at current levels and to get people to jobs as the region's economy continues to recover.
2. Ordinance 17169 requested the executive to develop a two-year congestion reduction transit incentives program to begin when a congestion reduction charge is first imposed, and to submit an ordinance to the council by November 1, 2011, proposing the program.
3. In accordance with K.C.C. 4.150.610, Metro Transit has previously provided free or discounted fare media for the purpose of attracting new ridership, relieving congestion, developing market strategies, testing prices or experimental service and implementing other

special transit programs or promotions. The distribution of free-ride tickets has been shown to change the behavior of people making trips within the county, encouraging long-term transit use and increasing the demand for transit services over time.

4. In accordance with K.C.C. 4.150.210, Metro Transit also provides deeply discounted tickets to human service agencies for distribution to their clients to provide access to important human services.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF KING COUNTY:

SECTION 1. A. The director of the department of transportation shall implement a two-year congestion reduction transit incentives program.

B. The transit incentives program shall offer King County vehicle owners, as part of the annual vehicle registration renewal, transit ridership incentives in the form of free-ride tickets. Each household in the county that has a vehicle owner who pays the annual vehicle registration renewal fee shall be eligible for eight free-ride tickets valid for a maximum of four months for use on regular transit division service during each twelve-month period for which a congestion reduction charge is applied. Only households with valid addresses within the county are eligible. Post office boxes shall not be considered valid addresses.

C. As an alternative to receiving eight free-ride tickets, each eligible household may instead choose to apply the value of the free-ride tickets towards the transit division's human services ticket program for the purpose of meeting the transportation needs of low income and homeless populations as provided for in K.C.C. 4.150.210. For each household selecting this option, the value to be applied to the human services ticket program shall be deemed to be equal to eight times the Metro subsidy of the average fare of human services tickets distributed pursuant to KCC 4.150.210 the previous year.

D. This congestion reduction transit incentive program shall run concurrently with the collection of the twenty-dollar congestion reduction charge as provided in Ordinance 17169.

SECTION 2. Ordinance 12643, Section 18, and K.C.C. 4150.610 are each hereby amended to read as

follows:

For the purpose of attracting new ridership, relieving congestion, developing market strategies, testing prices or experimental service, and implementing other special transit programs or promotions, the director may waive or discount the fare or pass prices otherwise established in this chapter whenever ~~((such))~~ the waiver or discount is not expected to require the addition of regularly scheduled public transportation services and, in the judgment of the director, the value of the program or promotion and the benefit to the public exceeds the expected loss of revenue. The loss in revenue of all such programs, promotions and fare discounts shall, in the aggregate, be no greater than ~~((\$350,000))~~ three hundred fifty thousand dollars, plus the value of tickets provided to eligible households through the congestion reduction transit incentives program described in section 1 of this ordinance, annually.

SECTION 3. Ordinance 12643, Section 19, as amended, and K.C.C. 4.150.210 are each hereby amended to read as follows:

The director is authorized to establish a program for the sale and distribution of tickets to human service agencies at twenty percent of their cash value for the purpose of meeting the transportation needs of low income and homeless populations. The total amount of the eighty percent discount provided under the program shall not exceed one million eight hundred seventy-five thousand dollars for any one year. However, the amount of the eighty percent discount may be increased by up to an additional two hundred thousand dollars annually under this human services ticket program for the value of tickets applied to it through the congestion reduction transit incentives program described in section 1 of this ordinance. The allocation of discount tickets under the program shall be made by the director in conjunction with local jurisdictions and the county's department or departments responsible for human services programs. The local jurisdictions and the county department or departments shall determine the number of tickets from their respective allocations ~~((which))~~ that shall be sold to the human service agencies eligible under the program. Tickets sold under the program are valid on all public transportation and paratransit service.

SECTION 4. Section 5 of this ordinance takes effect January 1, 2015.

SECTION 5. Ordinance 12643, Section 18, as amended, and K.C.C. 4.150.610 are each hereby amended to read as follows:

For the purpose of attracting new ridership, relieving congestion, developing market strategies, testing prices or experimental service, and implementing other special transit programs or promotions, the director may waive or discount the fare or pass prices otherwise established in this chapter whenever the waiver or discount is not expected to require the addition of regularly scheduled public transportation services and, in the judgment of the director, the value of the program or promotion and the benefit to the public exceeds the expected loss of revenue. The loss in revenue of all such programs, promotions and fare discounts shall, in the aggregate, be no greater than three hundred fifty thousand dollars ~~((plus the value of tickets provided to households through the congestion reduction transit incentives program described in section 1 of this ordinance,))~~ annually.

SECTION 6. Ordinance 12643, Section 19, as amended, and K.C.C. 4.150.210 are each hereby amended to read as follows:

The director is authorized to establish a program for the sale and distribution of tickets to human service agencies at twenty percent of their cash value for the purpose of meeting the transportation needs of low income and homeless populations. The total amount of the eighty percent discount provided under the program shall not exceed one million eight hundred seventy-five thousand dollars for any one year. ~~((However, the amount of the eighty percent discount may be increased by up to an additional two hundred thousand dollars annually under this human services ticket program for the value of tickets applied to it through the congestion reduction transit incentives program described in section 1 of this ordinance.))~~ The allocation of discount tickets under the program shall be made by the director in conjunction with local jurisdictions and the county's department or departments responsible for human services programs. The local jurisdictions and the county department or departments shall determine the number of tickets from their respective allocations that shall be

sold to the human service agencies eligible under the program. Tickets sold under the program are valid on all public transportation and paratransit service.

SECTION 7. Section 6 of this ordinance takes effect January 1, 2015. However, if the value of the free -ride tickets applied to the human services ticket program through the congestion reduction transit incentives program has not been exhausted and the executive provides notice to that effect to the council by December 31 of each year after January 1, 2015, the effective date of section 6 of this ordinance shall be extended in one-year increments. However, in no event shall the effective date of section 6 of this ordinance be extended beyond January 1, 2020.