

Legislation Text

File #: 2011-0356, **Version:** 1

A MOTION requesting the executive to develop a congestion reduction transit incentives program to increase transit ridership and reduce congestion.

WHEREAS, traffic congestion represents a significant economic and environmental cost to King County and the Puget Sound region, and

WHEREAS, according to the Texas Transportation Institute, in 2009 the Puget Sound region had the tenth-worst traffic congestion in the county, costing the region an estimated \$2.1 billion. The average commuter in Puget Sound experienced forty-four hours of delay annually and spent \$1,056 in lost fuel and time, and

WHEREAS, transit in the region saves more than 9.8 million gallons of fuel every year and reduces the cost of congestion by \$347 million annually, and

WHEREAS, without transit the Puget Sound region would experience an additional 14.1 million hours of delay per year, which is nearly six hours of additional delay per auto commuter, and

WHEREAS, Metro transit carried 109 million riders in 2010 and plays an important role in reducing congestion on our roads and highways, and

WHEREAS, on July 18, 2011, with Ordinance 17147, the King County council approved a congestion reduction plan identifying the role transit plays in reducing congestion, and how investment in transit will provide added capacity to move people on our roads and highways, and

WHEREAS, the congestion reduction plan identifies the importance of maintaining transit service levels while increasing ridership, and

WHEREAS, car owners in King County are a large population of potential regular bus riders, and

WHEREAS, an incentive for car owners that makes it easier for them to try riding the bus will help increase transit ridership and reduce congestion;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT MOVED by the Council of King County:

A. The executive is requested 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 council by November 1, 2011, proposing the program.

B. The program shall offer King County vehicle owners, as part of the annual vehicle registration renewal, an opportunity to receive transit ridership incentives in the form of free ride tickets. Each household in King County that has a vehicle owner who paid the annual vehicle registration renewal fee shall be eligible for eight free ride tickets during each twelve-month period for which a congestion reduction charge is imposed. Only households with addresses in King County are eligible.

C. The program shall offer vehicle owners an option to donate the value of the free ride tickets to the county's human services ticket program. The program should complement Metro's current human services ticket program and must consider the potential impact to Metro's near-term and long-term financial plans.

D. The goal of the program will be to increase ridership on Metro transit and help reduce congestion on King County roads and highways.

E. The 2012-2013 transit budget should include funding for the congestion reduction transit incentives program.