

SB 1536 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY
House Committee On Transportation Policy

Carrier: Rep. Evans

Action Date: 02/19/18
Action: Do Pass the A-Eng bill.
Vote: 9-0-0-0
Yeas: 9 - Bonham, Evans, McLain, Meek, Noble, Salinas, Vial, Wilson, Witt
Fiscal: No fiscal impact
Revenue: No revenue impact
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WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Provides that directors of certain mass transit districts be appointed by the Governor, rather than elected. Specifies that current elected directors may continue to serve until the expiration of their current terms, unless discharged by the Governor at an earlier date. Removes restrictions on methods of financing for certain mass transit districts effective January 1, 2026.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Comparison of Salem-Keizer Transit to other mass transit districts
- Seven-year moratorium on new funding initiatives enabled by measure
- Financial impact of House Bill 2017 (2017) on transit districts
- Elected transit district boards vs. Governor-appointed transit district boards
- Who Governor should consult prior to making board appointments
- Whether board members should instead be selected by local elected officials

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Mass transit districts provide public transportation for passengers and can include park-and-ride stations, transfer stations, parking lots, and transit malls. Oregon law allows two methods for the formation of a mass transit district: the first allows the mass transit district to include all territory within the counties comprising the metropolitan statistical area, and requires the Governor to appoint one director from each of seven subdistricts, subject to Senate confirmation; the other limits the size of the district to a city's urban growth boundary, and calls for the election of seven subdistrict directors by voters of each subdistrict. Mass transit districts formed under the latter method are required to seek voter approval for certain financing methods, including the levy of an employer payroll tax, sale of bonds, levy of business license fees or ad valorem taxes, the use of a revolving fund, or the levy of tax measured by net income.

Senate Bill 1536-A specifies that all mass transit districts be governed by a board of directors appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate. Any current board member may finish out the remainder of their current term unless removed by the Governor. The measure also repeals ORS 267.302, effective January 1, 2026, which has the effect of removing restrictions on the manner of financing available to some mass transit districts.