



SOUND CITIES ASSOCIATION

35 Cities. A Million People. One Voice.

President
Denis Law
Mayor
City of Renton

March 8, 2013

Vice President
Bob Sternoff
Councilmember
City of Kirkland

The Honorable Rep. Frank Chopp
Speaker of the House of Representatives

The Honorable Rep. Richard DeBolt
House Minority Leader

Treasurer
Don Gerend
Councilmember
City of Sammamish

The Honorable Sen. Rodney Tom
Senate Majority Coalition Leader

The Honorable Sen. Ed Murray
Senate Democratic Leader

Member-at-large
Jamie Perry
Councilmember
City of Kent

Dear Representative Chopp, Representative DeBolt, Senator Tom, and Senator Murray,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Board of Directors of the Sound Cities Association to express our collective support for Substitute House Bill 1253 and companion bill Substitute Senate Bill 5262, which would allow for the continued flexible use of local lodging tax funds.

Past President
Ken Hearing
Mayor
City of North Bend

As you know, the Sound Cities Association (formerly the Suburban Cities Association) was founded in the 1970s to help cities in King County act locally and partner regionally to create vital, livable communities through advocacy, education, leadership, mutual support, and networking. Collectively, our members represent 35 cities and nearly one million constituents in King County.

Members
Chris Eggen
Deputy Mayor
City of Shoreline

Our Public Issues Committee (PIC), which is made up of all 35 of our member cities, took emergency action this week to support this legislation, and our board voted unanimously to adopt a policy position in support of the flexible use of lodging tax revenues by local jurisdictions for the operations and marketing of special events and festivals beyond June 30, 2013, and passage of Substitute House Bill 1253 and companion bill Substitute Senate Bill 5262.

Dini Duclos
Councilmember
City of Federal Way

We took this action on an emergency basis because we believe passage of this legislation is vital to continuation of special events and community festivals that bring important tourism dollars into our local economies, and the state as a whole. Many events require the investment of significant resources by local jurisdictions. We know that these investments pay off. As just one example, the City of Federal Way invests approximately \$190,000 annually in lodging tax revenues to put on special events in the community. In 2012, Federal Way's investment of \$140,000 for the 2012 US Olympics Dive Trials resulted in a very successful weeklong event that generated \$4.3 million of new spending in King County and \$1.64 million in Federal Way, according to the Seattle Sports Commission. That benefits not just Federal Way, but all of King County, and Washington State as a whole.

Mia Gregerson
Deputy Mayor
City of SeaTac

Dave Hill
Mayor
City of Algona

David Johnston
City Manager
City of Maple Valley

Matt Larson
Mayor
City of Snoqualmie

Pete Lewis
Mayor
City of Auburn

John Marchione
Mayor
City of Redmond

Without the ability to utilize lodging tax revenues for both the marketing and operation of special events and festivals, our local jurisdictions and the state would be significantly compromised in their ability to bring in major events like Skate America, US Olympic trials, and NCAA competitions. Moreover, the loss of flexible use of these revenues would also compromise local jurisdictions' abilities to operate smaller local festivals and events, which contribute both to tourism, and to quality of life in our communities. We are deeply concerned about the adverse economic impacts of the potential loss of this flexibility, and we urge you to support passage of SHB 1253.

We thank you for your consideration.

Executive Director
Deanna Dawson

Sincerely,

Denis Law
Mayor, City of Renton
President, Sound Cities Association Board of Directors

Sound Cities Association
6300 Southcenter Boulevard
Tukwila, WA 98188
(206) 433-7168
SCA@SoundCities.org
www.SoundCities.org

cc: Washington State Legislative Leadership
King County Legislative Delegation
SCA Public Issues Committee
SCA Board of Directors