

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 504
By: Naishtat
Transportation
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The Capital Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Capital Metro) operates its Special Transit Services (STS) to provide transportation for persons with disabilities who are not able to use fixed route bus service. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires that Capital Metro provide unlimited paratransit services to all locations within $\frac{3}{4}$ mile of regular fixed route bus service. In addition to the ADA requirement, Capital Metro provides service to all locations within its service area on a first-come first-served basis. STS passengers pay 60¢ per ride, or 30¢ per ride if they buy multi-ride ticket booklets.

Capital Metro also is required by state law to provide paratransit service in municipalities that have withdrawn from Capital Metro's service area – Pflugerville, Cedar Park, Westlake Hills, and Rollingwood. However, state law also stipulates that these cities will pay for only 50 per cent of the operating cost to provide STS in their municipalities. In FY 2006, Capital Metro provided 5,296 STS trips in the withdrawn cities. The average operating cost per trip was \$44, for a total operating cost of \$235,521. Because state law requires these cities to reimburse Capital Metro for only half of these costs, their reimbursement was \$117,760.

HB 504 does not interfere or interrupt STS rides to these cities, but it would require that the withdrawn cities pay the full price of these services.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends section 451.616(a), Subchapter M, Chapter 451, Transportation Code, to increase the amount the Comptroller withholds of sales and use tax revenue refunded to a unit of election that has withdrawn from an authority from one-half to the full amount of the difference between the cost of providing services to persons with disabilities in the unit of election and the fares charged during the period in which the sales and use tax was collected.

SECTION 2. Effective Date.

EFFECTIVE DATE

Upon passage, or, if the Act does not receive the necessary vote, the Act takes effect September 1, 2007.