



Legislation Text

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File #: Res 31911, Version: 1

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**CITY OF SEATTLE**

**RESOLUTION \_\_\_\_\_**

A RESOLUTION opposing Washington Initiative Measure 976 (“I-976”) and urging Seattle voters to vote “No” on I-976 on the November 5, 2019, general election ballot.

WHEREAS, Washington Initiative Measure 976 (hereinafter, “I-976”) would undermine progress made by The City of Seattle, Sound Transit, and the State of Washington in building a more equitable and sustainable transportation system that responds to the challenges posed by the region’s extraordinary growth, an ongoing climate crisis, and past failures to build a mass transit system that could efficiently and cost effectively serve the needs of Seattle in the twenty-first century, by eliminating major funding sources for light rail expansion, bus service in Seattle, and the primary sources of non-highway spending at the state level; and

WHEREAS, I-976 would repeal funding authority for all or substantial portions of transportation benefit districts in Seattle and 61 other cities across Washington State, a sum of \$60 million per year that is largely dedicated to improving safety and maintaining infrastructure and, as in Seattle, to reducing crowding and expanding access to bus service; and

WHEREAS, I-976 is intended to eliminate \$24 million per year in Seattle Transportation Benefit District funding primarily dedicated to additional bus service for Seattle riders that helps alleviate overcrowding; adds more speed and reliability; and provides more all-day, evening, and weekend bus service accessible to more Seattle neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS, Seattle Transit Benefit District-funded expansion of bus service has allowed Seattle to absorb much of its growth via transit rather than additional cars, providing 350,000 new annual service hours -

the equivalent of 8,000 weekly bus trips or 79 buses running 12 hours per day 365 days a year - capacity for 106,032 additional bus rides per day on bus routes serving Seattle, providing ten-minute or better all-day bus service within a ten-minute walk to 70 percent of Seattle households (up from 25 percent in 2015); and

WHEREAS, I-976 would also eliminate or reduce funding now dedicated to low-income transit access and ORCA passes to all Seattle public high school students, Seattle Promise Scholars, and income-eligible middle school students; and

WHEREAS, I-976 would also eliminate nearly \$8 million per year in funding dedicated to City transportation programs that include pothole repair and neighborhood street maintenance, protected bike lanes, safer pedestrian crossings, frequent transit corridor improvements, and the Seattle Department of Transportation's program to improve accessibility for people with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, I-976 is intended to eliminate \$20 billion in funding for expansion of light rail to West Seattle and Ballard, along with other elements of the 2016 voter-approved Sound Transit 3 measure; and

WHEREAS, I-976 would eliminate the primary sources of state funding for safety improvements and non-highway modes of transportation, including passenger rail service connecting Seattle with Portland and Vancouver; \$1.3 billion in ferry vessel improvements; \$15 million per year in Washington State Patrol safety programs; \$50 million per year in regional transit mobility grants; a multitude of freight mobility and highway safety projects; state funding for Safe Routes to Schools and other bike and pedestrian safety investments; and state funding for special needs transit that serves seniors, veterans, and people with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, passage of I-976, even if it might eventually be repealed by the courts, could tie up funding for local bus service, light rail expansion, and state programs for several years, grinding to a halt progress on addressing Washington's growth, safety, equity, climate, and traffic needs, delaying projects and potentially creating financial turmoil for Sound Transit with bond markets; and

WHEREAS, Puget Sound residents have voted to tax themselves to address their own transportation needs by building light rail for traffic relief, improving safety and maintenance of the existing right-of-way, and expanding bus access; and

WHEREAS, after notice in accordance with RCW 42.17A.555 and Seattle Municipal Code Section 2.04.300, persons in favor of I-976 and those opposed to it have been given an equal opportunity to share their views in an open public meeting; NOW, THEREFORE,

**BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SEATTLE, THE MAYOR  
CONCURRING, THAT:**

Section 1. The Mayor and Seattle City Council urge Seattle voters to vote “No” on Washington Initiative Measure 976 in the November 2019 general election.

Adopted by the City Council the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2019, and signed by me in open session in authentication of its adoption this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2019.

\_\_\_\_\_  
President \_\_\_\_\_ of the City Council

The Mayor concurred the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2019.

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Jenny A. Durkan, Mayor

Filed by me this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2019.

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Monica Martinez Simmons, City Clerk

(Seal)