

**CITY OF BURIEN
AGENDA BILL**

Agenda Subject: Public Safety Authority		Meeting Date: July 18, 2011
Department: City Manager	Attachments: Public Safety Authority overview	Fund Source: N/A Activity Cost: N/A Amount Budgeted: N/A Unencumbered Budget Authority: N/A
Contact: Mike Martin		
Telephone: (206) 248-5503		
Adopted Initiative: Yes No X	Initiative Description: Creation of new mechanism to fund the police function	
PURPOSE/REQUIRED ACTION: This agenda bill has two purposes. First, staff wishes to familiarize council with legislation that would offer an alternative to traditional funding of the police function. Second, staff wants to understand the level of council support to deploy this legislation in Burien, if it is adopted into law by the state legislature. There is no required action, but staff would like an expression of concensus that the council would seriously consider using this legislation should it become available in 2012.		
BACKGROUND (Include prior Council action & discussion): Part of Burien’s 2010 State legislative agenda included an initiative that contemplated advancing legislation to create a new “public safety authority.” Simply put, the legislation would have provided interested jurisdictions, including cities, a new way of paying for the police function. Twin bills were advanced in both the state House and Senate and heard in their relevant committees. However, neither bill passed out of committee. This was largely due to the fact that staff’s intent was merely to educate lawmakers on the intent of the bill, and to generate discussion about it among interested parties. The legislation died at the end of session. Staff intends to ask council to include the Public Safety Authority legislation in our 2011 legislative agenda and it is conceivable that a bill may be successful. Though generally supportive of the legislation in the past, council members have asked for clarification about what it is and how it might be applied in Burien. If council remains interested and supportive of the legislation, staff will continue to pursue it in Olympia. If that effort is successful, staff would return to council to ask authority to implement it in Burien. If there are obvious flaws in the legislation that would cause the council to reject it as a possible funding source for public safety in Burien, staff would cease any effort to advance the legislation.		
OPTIONS (Including fiscal impacts): 1) Indicate by concensus that council remains interested in this legislation and wishes staff to continue pursuing it. 2) Indicate by concensus that council is not interested in this legislation, in which case staff would abandon further work on it.		
Administrative Recommendation: Staff believes there is merit in this legislation and recommends council indicate sufficient interest to continue pursuing it.		
Committee Recommendation: N/A		
Advisory Board Recommendation: N/A		
Suggested Motion: None necessary		
Submitted by: Mike Martin		
Administration _____	City Manager _____	
Today’s Date: 07/13/11	File Code: \\File01\records\CC\Agenda Bill 2011\071811cm-3 public safety authority.docx	

Public Safety Authority

What this bill does:

- It provides the opportunity for cities and counties to create, by vote, a Public Safety Authority (PSA) that would ensure police services are adequately funded. It does this by mirroring the successful Regional Fire Protection Services Authority statute (RCW 52.26) already in use.

Facts:

- Creation of the PSA itself requires a public vote.
- A PSA would be supported by *existing* property taxes currently collected by a city. Those funds would be *shifted to* the PSA and *away* from the city with *no net increase to taxpayers*.
- A PSA could ask voters to increase taxes, or for authority to charge a “benefit assessment” to support a greater level of police service.
- *Any new or additional tax or fee would require a public vote.*
- The PSA area could include one or more cities, depending on how the agency is formed, just like a Transportation Benefit District, already in statute.
- A PSA would be governed by a subset of existing city council or councils so it does not add a layer of governance. (This is different than special purpose districts; they have a separately elected governing body).
- The PSA would not need a separate bureaucracy. Services such as human resources, legal, finance, risk management, etc. could be provided by the sponsoring city.
- The relationship between the agency and the city would be almost identical to the relationship a city has with its own police department, both in governance and support. The significant difference is in its funding and in its relationship to residents.
- Like a Regional Fire Authority, this mechanism provides a more direct and tangible linkage between taxpayers and police services. This linkage has been demonstrated as a key to the adequate funding of critical public safety services.

