

[Senate Bill 5262](#) and [House bill 1253](#) regarding the use of lodging tax funds are similar except the Senate bill removes capital expenditures as an authorized use. Both clarify that the funds can be used for special events and festivals designed to attract tourism.

Some of the current uses of the lodging taxes were scheduled to sunset June 30, 2013. Senator Kevin Ranker (D- Orcas Island) is one of the sponsors of the senate bill.

Representative Kris Lytton (D-Anacortes) is one of the sponsors of [House Bill 1253](#) which also allows property owned by a nonprofit organization to continue to be considered a "tourism-related facility" and modifies and extends reporting requirements related to the expenditure of lodging tax revenues.

The summary of changes as the result of SB 5262 states:

Clarifies that the funds are authorized to be used for special events and festivals designed to attract tourism.

Removes capital expenditures as an authorized use.

Provides that lodging tax revenues may be used to support the operation of tourism-related facilities owned or operated by nonprofit organizations.

Provides that when applicants apply for funding they must give estimates on how the monies they receive will increase the number of tourists visiting the local jurisdiction including anticipated overnight stays.

Provides that applicants in a municipality with a population of over 5000 must submit their applications to the local tax advisory committee.

The local tax advisory committee must select candidates and recommended amounts of funding and provide a list of those candidates to the local jurisdiction for final determination.

The local jurisdiction is only authorized to choose recipients from that list.

Provides that the report submitted to the local jurisdiction be given to COM and that on a biennial basis JLARC must use such report to determine the economic impact of the lodging tax revenues. JLARC must brief the Legislature on this report beginning in 2015.

Amends the definition of tourist.

Makes a technical correction to clarify that recipients of funds, not applicants, must submit a report to the local jurisdiction concerning the outcomes from the received funds.