

OPTIMISTIC OUTLOOK FOR TRANSIT TAX

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An influential lobbyist working to pass a local-option tax to fund public transportation in the Treasure Valley thinks he may have enough votes to get the legislation through the House Revenue and Taxation Committee.

Roy Eiguren, a lobbyist for Valley Regional Transit, said that between seven and nine committee members are in favor of the local option tax. Three of the committee seats are currently vacant, and will be filled Dec. 7 at the organizational session of the Idaho Legislature, he said.

Eiguren made his comments at the Valley Regional Transit management committee meeting Dec. 4.

“A real conflict has emerged in the business community,” he said. “Many people, including the Legislature, believe public transportation is integral to continued economic growth.”

The legislation, if approved, would give citizens of Ada and Canyon counties the opportunity to vote on increasing the sales tax in the two counties to pay for expanding the public transportation system.

A majority of the 19 members of the House Revenue and Taxation Committee must approve the legislation before the full House can vote on it. The legislation must also be approved by the State Senate and Governor-elect C.L. “Butch” Otter.