

SINGLE SUBJECT RULING:

ENGROSSED SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 6614

(March 7, 2018)

In responding to the Point of Order raised by Senator Braun as to whether Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill 6614 violates Senate Rule 25, the single subject rule, the President finds and rules as follows:

Article II, Section 19 of the State Constitution and Senate Rule 25 mandate that “[n]o bill shall embrace more than one subject and that shall be expressed in the title.” Precedential rulings by Lieutenant Governor Brad Owen articulate that in complying with the single subject rule, there must be some “rational unity” between the general subject of a bill and its incidental subdivisions.

As to whether ESSB 6614 violates the single subject rule, the President finds it is important, as an initial matter, to determine what the bill seeks to do. Here, ESSB 6614 both reduces property taxes and provides for the allocation of certain revenue. As Senator Braun noted, these are dual objectives. However, the President finds there is a rational unifying theme between the two, which is the provision of unexpected state revenue.

The Legislature is faced with unanticipated excess revenue in fiscal year 2019, and must address and dispose of these funds. The policy prescription chosen in ESSB 6614 is the reduction of taxes and the allocation of some of the remaining funds to the Education Legacy Trust Account. While these respective policy choices may be more amenable to some members than to others, they nevertheless share a rational unifying theme, which is the disposition of unanticipated state revenue.

As such, the President finds that the measure does not violate Senate Rule 25.