

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HJR 4220

As Passed Legislature

Brief Description: Amending the Constitution to restrict the number of years excess levies by fire protection districts can be made.

Sponsors: By Representatives Dunshee and Mulliken.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Local Government & Housing: 1/30/02 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 2/14/02, 98-0.

Passed Senate: 3/8/02, 48-0.

Passed Legislature.

<h3>Brief Summary of Bill</h3>

- Allows fire protection district levies for up to four year periods for general purposes and up to six years for the construction, modernization or remodeling of facilities.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT & HOUSING

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 11 members: Representatives Dunshee, Chair; Edwards, Vice Chair; Mulliken, Ranking Minority Member; Berkey, Crouse, DeBolt, Dunn, Hatfield, Kirby, Mielke and Sullivan.

Staff: Amy Wood (786-7127).

Background:

The Washington State Constitution specifies that propositions to levy additional taxes for fire protection district operating purposes must be limited to a period of one year. An amendment to change the state constitution must be approved by a two-thirds majority of both houses of the Legislature, followed by a majority of the people.

Summary of Bill:

A constitutional amendment is proposed to increase the one year period for authorizing a fire protection district operating levy. Propositions to levy additional taxes for fire protection district operating purposes may be for a period of up to four years.

The secretary of state is directed to give proper notice of a constitutional amendment to be ratified by the people.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not Requested.

Testimony For: Currently, fire districts must submit levies every year. This is an expensive and inefficient process. Furthermore, fire districts must wait each year to learn whether their levies have passed and whether they have enough funding to continue or whether they must make budget or job cuts. Extending the levy period to four years will allow for more effective and efficient long term revenue planning and funding by the fire districts.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: (In support) Representative Dunshee, prime sponsor; and Ryan Spiller, Washington Fire Commissioners Association.