

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 1927

AS OF MARCH 22, 1991

Brief Description: Changing provisions relating to assumption of metropolitan municipal corporation functions by a county.

SPONSORS: House Committee on Local Government (originally sponsored by Representatives Nelson, Brough, Haugen and Holland).

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS

Staff: Rod McAulay (786-7754)

Hearing Dates:

BACKGROUND:

Metropolitan municipal corporations (metros) are authorized to be formed to provide a variety of public facilities and services. The metropolitan council of a metro is a federated body consisting of members of the county legislative authority of the county in which the metro is located, officials of cities within the metro, and other appointed officials.

Two metros have been created. The Metropolitan Municipal Corporation of Seattle performs public transit and sewage disposal within King County. SnoMet is authorized to perform regional planning throughout Snohomish County, but is inactive.

Legislation was enacted in 1977 allowing a class AA or A county in which a metro exists to assume the powers of the metro if a ballot proposition authorizing the assumption is approved by the voters of both: (1) the central city; and (2) the remainder of the metro outside of the central city. This dual voter approval requirement is the same as to create a metro.

The Federal District Court in Seattle recently held that the scheme of representation on the metropolitan council of the Metropolitan Municipal Corporation of Seattle violates the "one person, one vote" doctrine that has been established by the United States Supreme Court under the Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendment to the United States Constitution. The judge has ruled that the scheme of representation on the metropolitan council must be remedied by April 3, 1992.

SUMMARY:

The statute allowing a class AA or A county to assume the powers of a metro located within its boundaries is amended to eliminate the voting requirement and to provide that on April 3, 1992, a county with a population of one million or more that is coterminous with a metro shall assume the rights, powers, functions, and obligations of the metro, if the county has a charter amendment providing a mechanism for cities to have a role in regional decisions in the county.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: none requested