

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5448

**AS REPORTED BY COMMITTEE ON ENERGY & UTILITIES,
FEBRUARY 14, 1991**

Brief Description: Changing procedures for public utility district elections.

SPONSORS: Senators Owen, Williams, Jesernig and Thorsness.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY & UTILITIES

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Thorsness, Chairman; Saling, Vice Chairman; Jesernig, Nelson, Patterson, Roach, Stratton, Sutherland, and Williams.

Staff: Dave Monthie (786-7198)

Hearing Dates: February 12, 1991; February 14, 1991

BACKGROUND:

The state's general election laws are contained in Title 29 RCW. Title 29 generally requires that candidates either pay a filing fee that correlates to the level of compensation for the elective position, or file a petition with a requisite number of signatures. Elections to boards of special districts (such as fire, water, sewer, port) may also be governed by other provisions in statute relating to each type of special district. Some special districts require that candidates for seats on the governing board at the formation election file petitions with a minimum number of signatures, and that subsequent elections be governed by the provisions of Title 29. Other special district elections simply utilize the provisions of Title 29 for all elections.

The statutory provisions governing public utility district elections require that candidates for all elections file petitions with the signatures of at least 100 registered voters within the district.

SUMMARY:

The signature petition requirement is limited to candidates for election to the board at the formation election. The nomination of a person for election at the formation election must be by at least 100 registered voters. The person must execute and file a declaration of candidacy pursuant to Title 29 RCW, and the filing must otherwise conform to Title 29. After the formation election, candidates for PUD commissioner must file declarations of candidacy and their election shall be conducted as provided by the general election laws in Title 29.

Other minor changes are made to RCW 54.12.010.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: available

TESTIMONY FOR:

Current provisions governing PUD elections have not been changed since PUD's were authorized in 1931, and need to be updated. There is no reason to require persons running for election to PUD boards to have to obtain signatures when other special districts permit the payment of a filing fee in lieu of signatures. County auditors would prefer not to have to take the time to verify the signatures on the petitions.

TESTIMONY AGAINST: None

TESTIFIED: Senator Brad Owen (pro); John Whalen, Mason County PUD #3 (pro)