

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SB 6520

As Reported By House Committee On:
Local Government

Title: An act relating to park and recreation district elections.

Brief Description: Eliminating the primary in park and recreation district elections.

Sponsors: Senators Oke and Haugen.

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Local Government, February 25, 1994, DP.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Majority Report: Do pass as amended. Signed by 7 members: Representatives H. Myers, Chair; Springer, Vice Chair; Edmondson, Ranking Minority Member; Reams, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Dunshee; Rayburn and Zellinsky.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 4 members: Representatives R. Fisher; Horn; Moak and Van Luven.

Staff: Bill Lynch (786-7092).

Background: Park and recreation districts are governed by a board of five commissioners elected at nonpartisan elections. The commissioners are not compensated.

Park and recreation districts often operate on minimal budgets, relying extensively on volunteer support for maintenance and program activities. Local governmental entities must compensate the county auditor for the expense of any elections. Occasionally, when more than two candidates file to run for a park and recreation district commissioner position, a primary must be conducted, adding considerable expense to the district's budget.

Summary of Bill: When electing commissioners to govern park and recreation districts, there shall be no primary to nominate candidates. The names of all persons who file and qualify as candidates shall appear on the general election ballot and the person receiving the highest number of votes shall be elected.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: Even though a primary does not occur very often in park and recreation districts, when it does happen it can be devastating to the district that has to cover the primary costs. This will enable limited funds to go to improving parks.

Testimony Against: None.

Witnesses: Senator Oke, prime sponsor; and Berva Luce, South Kitsap Parks and Recreation.