

SENATE BILL REPORT

ESB 5155

AS PASSED SENATE, JANUARY 28, 1994

Brief Description: Changing requirements for the establishment of community councils.

SPONSORS: Senators Skratek, Haugen, Drew and Roach

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Haugen, Chairman; Drew, Vice Chairman; Loveland and Winsley.

Staff: Eugene Green (786-7405)

Hearing Dates: February 10, 1993; February 16, 1993; January 18, 1994

BACKGROUND:

A community council must have at least 1,000 people residing within an unincorporated community. It is created by the filing of a petition, signed by at least 10 percent of those who voted in the last state general election. If the petition is valid, the county legislative authority must call a special election to determine whether a community council shall be created and to elect from five to 11 initial council members. Council members terms are for four years and elections are nonpartisan.

If created, the county legislative authority must adopt an ordinance establishing policies and conditions and designate portions of the county comprehensive plan and zoning ordinances that serve as an overall guide and framework for the development of proposed community comprehensive plans and proposed community zoning ordinances. Proposed community comprehensive plans and zoning ordinances adopted by a community council must be submitted to the county legislative authority for review of consistency with the county ordinance. Approved community comprehensive plans and zoning ordinances are enforced by the county as if they had been adopted by the county legislative authority.

Community councils have no authority to take quasi-judicial actions or to decide permit applications. Community councils are subject to the Open Public Meetings Act. The county provides administrative staff and support for a council.

After four years, a vote must be taken on whether to retain the community council.

Only in counties with a population of over 30,000 that are made up entirely of islands may a community council be created.

SUMMARY:

A community council may also be created in unincorporated areas in counties with a population of over one million (King).

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: none requested

TESTIMONY FOR:

This would give people in the unincorporated areas of all counties a better chance to have their voices heard.

TESTIMONY AGAINST:

It is just another layer of government that will make development more complex and time consuming.

TESTIFIED: Patrick Lawler, John Whitlock, Carol Campbell, Vashon Governance Committee (pro); Jim Halstrom, Master Builders Association of King and Snohomish Counties (con); Dan Hudson, Washington Association of Realtors (con); Enid Layes, AWB (con); Greg Nickels, King County Council; Everett Wishock, Marianne Talney Jones, Coalition of Washington Communities (pro); Dick Dadman, Building Industry Association of Washington (con)