

SENATE BILL REPORT

E2SSB 5329

AS PASSED SENATE, FEBRUARY 9, 1994

Brief Description: Revising provisions relating to port district elections.

SPONSORS: Senate Committee on Government Operations (originally sponsored by Senators Haugen, A. Smith and Talmadge)

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

Majority Report: That Second Substitute Senate Bill No. 5329 be substituted therefor, and the second substitute bill do pass.

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

Staff: Rod McAulay (786-7754)

Hearing Dates: February 5, 1993; February 17, 1993; January 14, 1994

BACKGROUND:

Port districts are governed by a board of three or five elected port commissioners. Port districts with a population of less than 500,000, are divided into three commissioner districts. In such port districts, each commissioner must reside in and be nominated from one of the commissioner districts, but all commissioners are elected at-large.

The voters of a port district may petition for an election to increase the commission from three to five commissioners. If a port district which is divided into three commissioner districts expands to five commissioners, the two additional commissioners are nominated and elected at-large and no new commissioner districts are created.

In less-than-countywide port districts, no statutory authority or procedure exists to eliminate commissioner districts.

When creating a less-than-countywide port district with an assessed valuation of at least \$75 million in a county bordering on salt water, commissioner districts are not used in the initial election.

When creating a countywide port district no provision is made for establishing the boundaries of commissioner districts prior to the election of the first commission.

When a port district attains a population of 500,000, the question of enlarging the commission from three to five members is automatically submitted to the voters.

SUMMARY:

Every countywide port district with less than 500,000 population shall be divided into three or five commissioner districts for purposes of nominating candidates.

A majority of the voters of a less than countywide port district may abolish the division of the district into commissioner districts. The issue may be placed on the ballot by resolution of the commission or on the petition of 10 percent of the voters.

When creating a countywide port district, commissioner districts are described in the petition or resolution calling for the formation of the port district.

When creating a less than countywide port district with an assessed valuation of at least \$75 million in a county bordering on salt water, the petition initiating the creation of the district may provide that there be either three or five commissioners and may establish commissioner districts.

A ballot measure to increase a port district commission from three to five members may be initiated by a resolution of the commission. When a port district increases from three to five members, the incumbent commissioners may divide the district into five commissioner districts or may provide that the two new commissioners be nominated and elected at-large. If two or more incumbent commissioners reside in one of the newly created districts, those commissioners shall determine who will represent the district by lot. The commissioner not selected by lot shall represent one of the new districts in which no incumbent resides, for the balance of his or her term. The two new commissioners shall be nominated from the remaining unrepresented commissioner districts.

Ballot measures concerning the increase of commissioners to five, or concerning the reduction of the terms of commissioners from six to four years, may be voted on at any special or general election date.

The section of the port district laws which was both amended and repealed in the same law enacted in 1992 is reenacted as amended.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: none requested

TESTIMONY FOR: None

TESTIMONY AGAINST: None

TESTIFIED: No one