

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6020

AS REPORTED BY COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS,
JANUARY 26, 1994

Brief Description: Revising provisions relating to city and town incorporations.

SPONSORS: Senators Haugen and Winsley

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

Majority Report: Do pass.

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

Staff: Eugene Green (786-7405)

Hearing Dates: January 20, 1994; January 26, 1994

BACKGROUND:

Contiguous areas located outside of a city or town may incorporate if the population of the area is at least 300. This threshold was established in 1890. However, no area may incorporate that is located within five air miles of a city with a population of 15,000 or more unless the area has a population of at least 3,000.

Under the Growth Management Act, no city or town planning under the act may annex territory beyond the city's or town's urban growth area. No restriction exists on a city or town incorporation outside of an urban growth boundary.

If a new city or town is approved, special elections are held to elect the initial officials. A new city or town is officially incorporated after a transition period. The next set of elected officials for the new city or town is elected at the first municipal general election that occurs one or more years after the official date the city or town is incorporated. It is not clear how the terms of a city or town council are staggered at that election.

State statutes set the initial salaries of council members and the mayor of a newly incorporated code city. No statutes set the salaries in newly incorporated noncode cities and towns. The state Constitution prohibits officials who have the authority to set their own salaries from increasing their salaries during their current terms of office.

SUMMARY:

The minimum population of an area that may incorporate as a city or town is increased from 300 to 1,500. The restriction is retained that a newly incorporated city or town must have a population of at least 3,000 if it is within five air miles of a city with a population of 15,000 or more.

A city or town may not incorporate outside of an urban growth area in a county that plans under all the requirements of the Growth Management Act.

The number of signatures of voters who reside in an area proposed to be incorporated as a city or town that is necessary on a petition to initiate the incorporation process is corrected, from a number of such voters equal in number to at least 10 percent of the number of votes cast in that area at the last state general election, to at least 10 percent of the number of such voters who voted in that area at the last state general election.

The staggering of terms of office of the council members on a new city or town is clarified. A simple majority of the persons elected as council members at the first municipal general election occurring at least one year after the official date of the incorporation are elected to four-year terms of office and the remainder are elected to two-year terms of office. Their successors are elected to four-year terms of office.

Compensation for council members or commissioners of a newly incorporated noncode city or town is the same as is currently established for council members of a newly incorporated code city.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: none requested

TESTIMONY FOR:

We don't need very small cities. Considering state's growth, 1,500 is a fair minimum figure for city incorporations.

TESTIMONY AGAINST: None

TESTIFIED: Dave Williams, AWC