

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6022

AS PASSED SENATE, FEBRUARY 14, 1994

Brief Description: Revising requirements for publication of ordinances.

SPONSORS: Senators Haugen and Winsley

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

Majority Report: Do pass.

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

Staff: Eugene Green (786-7405)

Hearing Dates: January 27, 1994; February 4, 1994

BACKGROUND:

Promptly after adopting an ordinance, first, second, and third class cities, unclassified cities, towns, and code cities must publish the text or a summary of the content of each ordinance at least once in the city or town's official newspaper. A summary is a brief description of the main points of the ordinance. When a summary is published, a statement that the full text of the ordinance is mailed upon request is included. An inadvertent mistake or omission in the publication of the text or summary does not render the ordinance invalid.

When any county, city, or town is required by law to publish legal notices containing the full text of any proposed or adopted ordinance in a newspaper, the county, city, or town may publish a summary of the ordinance approved by the governing body. The summary includes the name of the county, city, or town, the formal identification or citation number of the ordinance, a section-by-section summary, any other information which is necessary to provide a complete summary, and a statement that the full text will be mailed upon request. If the ordinance contains provisions regarding taxation or penalties or contains legal descriptions of real property, the sections containing this information are published in full. The full text of any ordinance is mailed without charge to any person upon request.

When a city or town codifies its ordinances, a copy of the codification is filed in the office of the city or town clerk. A means of providing a single source for cities and towns to access information regarding ordinances of other cities or towns is desired.

SUMMARY:

A city, town, or county is given the option to publish the title or the full text of each ordinance adopted. When just the title of the ordinance is published, the statement that the full text of the ordinance will be mailed upon request limits the request period for free copies to ninety days after publication of the title.

The clerk of every city and town must provide the Municipal Research Council or its designee a copy of each regulatory ordinance promptly after adoption. The Municipal Research Council or its designee may develop a list of other kinds of ordinances to be furnished by the clerk after adoption. The copies of the ordinances are provided without charge. This information is available to the entities contracting with the Municipal Research Council for services.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: none requested

TESTIMONY FOR:

It would be a great savings of money. Almost no one reads these items. Most titles of ordinances would be sufficient to let people know what it is about.

TESTIMONY AGAINST:

People do read legal notices. People should be informed.

TESTIFIED: Stan Finkelstein, AWC (pro); Hugh Spitzer, Foster, Pepper & Shefelman (pro); Charlotte Taylor, WA Municipal Clerks Assn. (pro); Gayla Gjertsen, City of Tumwater; George Barnes, WDUK (pro); Gary Lowe, WA Assn. of Counties (pro); Rowland Thompson, Allied Daily Newspapers (con); Diana Kramer, Washington Newspaper Publishers Assn.