

**SENATE BILL REPORT**

**SB 6520**

**AS PASSED SENATE, FEBRUARY 11, 1994**

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

**SPONSORS:** Senators Oke and Haugen

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS**

**Majority Report:** Do pass.

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

**Staff:** Rod McAulay (786-7754)

**Hearing Dates:** February 2, 1994; February 4, 1994

**BACKGROUND:**

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

Park and recreation districts fund their activities through user fees and through voter approved property levies. They 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. It is believed the added cost of conducting primaries is not justified, considering the nature of the position.

**SUMMARY:**

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.

**Appropriation:** none

**Revenue:** none

**Fiscal Note:** none requested

**TESTIMONY FOR:**

Cost of primary is high and not necessary for effective government. This will enable limited funds to go to improving parks.

**TESTIMONY AGAINST:** None

**TESTIFIED:** Senator Oke, prime sponsor; Jessie Turner, South Kitsap Park and Recreation District