

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 6489

As Reported By House Committee On:

Government Administration

Title: An act relating to district court elections.

Brief Description: Specifying that there will be no primary for a district court position when there are no more than two candidates filed for the position.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Government Operations (originally sponsored by Senators McCaslin, Long, Hargrove, Fairley, Goings, Hale, Kline, Thibaudeau, Prince, Patterson, Winsley, Kohl, Oke and Haugen).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Government Administration: 2/18/98 [DP].

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 10 members: Representatives D. Schmidt, Chairman; D. Sommers, Vice Chairman; Scott, Ranking Minority Member; Doumit; Dunn; Dunshee; Murray; L. Thomas; Wensman and Wolfe.

Staff: Steve Lundin (786-7127).

Background: The use of primaries in the process of electing persons to nonpartisan offices varies.

A primary is always held as part of the process to elect persons to all judicial offices, even when only one person files a declaration of candidacy for the office. However, if only one person files a declaration of candidacy for the office of a superior court judge in a county with a population of 100,000 or more, no primary or election is held and a certificate of election is issued to that person.

A primary is held as part of the process to elect persons to all other local government nonpartisan offices, only if three or more persons file declarations of candidacy for the office. However, a primary is never held as part of the process to elect persons as cemetery district commissioners or park and recreation district commissioners, no matter how many persons file declarations of candidacy for the office.

Summary of Bill: The process to elect persons as district court judges is altered.

The new process to elect persons as district court judges conforms with the standard process of electing persons to non-judicial local government nonpartisan offices, where a primary is held only if three or more persons file declarations of candidacy for the position.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: This is a good little bill. Money will be saved.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Judge Steve Dwyer and Judge Mike Padden, District Municipal Court Judges Association (DMCJA).