

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Olympia Washington

BilAnalysis

Bill No. SB 5521

Authorizing county research service
Brief title

Public Arg: 4/2/97

Comm. Ways & Means (Sen. Haugen)
Sponsor

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BACKGROUND:

The Municipal Research Council is a state agency that contracts to have municipal research and services provided for cities and towns. The council is composed of 18 members: (1) Four appointed by the Speaker of the House with the equal representation from each of the two major political parties; (2) four appointed by the President of the Senate with the equal representation from each of the two major political parties; (3) one independent person appointed by the Governor and (4) nine city and town officials appointed by the board of directors of the Association of Washington Cities. The activities and services of the Municipal Research Council are carried on in cooperation with the Association of Washington Cities.

For years the Municipal Research Council has contracted with the Municipal Research and Services Center of Washington, a private non-profit corporation, to provide these services for cities and towns.

Money appropriated by the Legislature to fund the Municipal Research Council is diverted from state motor vehicle excise tax receipts that otherwise would be distributed to cities and towns on a per capita basis.

The state imposes excise taxes on liquor, a portion of which is deposited in the liquor excise tax fund. Twenty percent of the liquor excise tax receipts that are replaced into this fund are redistributed to the counties of the state.

SUMMARY:

The responsibilities of the Municipal Research Council are expanded to include contracting for county research and services.

Cont.

Membership on the Municipal Research Council is altered. The number of members on the Municipal Research Council is increased from 18 to 19, by reducing the number of legislators by four, two from each house, and adding five county officials who are appointed by the Governor. The Governor appoints the county officials two from nominees submitted by the board of the Washington Association of County Officials and three from nominees submitted by the board of the Washington State Association of Counties. The Governor appoints the nine city or town officials from at least nine nominees submitted by the board of directors of the Association of Washington Cities Council, rather than the board of directors of the Association of Washington Cities, making the appointments itself. Members who are appointed as legislators or local officials lose their council positions if they no longer are legislators or local officials.

A request for legal services by a county official shall be sent to the office of county prosecuting attorney. A Municipal Research Council's response to a request for legal services shall be provided to the requesting county official and to the county prosecuting attorney.

The activities of the Municipal Research Council must be carried on in cooperation with the Washington State Association of Counties, in addition to the Association of Washington Cities.

Services provided to cities and towns by the Municipal Research Council shall be in proportion to the moneys appropriated for city and town research and services. Services provided to counties by the Municipal Research Council shall be in proportion to the moneys appropriated to county research and services.

The county research services account is created in the state treasury. Only so much money as is appropriated for the purposes of county research is transferred to the new account. Moneys in the county research services account may be spent only after appropriation and only to finance the costs of county research.

Each quarter and prior to making distribution of the state liquor excise tax receipts to counties, the state treasurer transfers enough liquor excise tax receipts to the county research services account that when combined with any cash balance in the account are sufficient to fund allotments from any legislative appropriation from the county research services account.

FISCAL NOTE: Not requested.

EFFECTIVE DATE: The bill includes an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.