

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5635

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Agriculture & Environment, March 5, 1997

Title: An act relating to compensation for members of air pollution control authorities.

Brief Description: Authorizing reimbursement and eliminating compensation for members of air pollution control authorities.

Sponsors: Senators Fraser and Haugen.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Agriculture & Environment: 2/27/97, 3/4/97, 3/5/97 [DPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & ENVIRONMENT

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5635 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Morton, Chair; Swecker, Vice Chair; Fraser, McAuliffe, Newhouse, Oke and Rasmussen.

Staff: Richard Duggan (786-7414)

Background: When the Washington Clean Air Act was adopted in 1957, local and regional air pollution control authorities were established to assist in its implementation. Each of these authorities is governed by a board of directors, the members of which are selected by the mayors of the towns and cities located in the county or region included in the authority.

The law provides for the payment of compensation to these board members for the time spent on the authority's business and for reimbursement of expenses. Originally, the act directed payment of \$25 per day, with an annual limit of \$1,000. In 1991, that directive was modified to replace the fixed daily stipend with an amount "consistent with the authority's rates," but still subject to the \$1,000 annual ceiling.

The current practice of the authorities is to pay compensation at a rate which varies, apparently, from nothing to \$50 per day. Most of the members of the boards are public officials or employees who presumably turn their compensation over to the local governments they represent, although there is no requirement in the act that they do so.

Summary of Substitute Bill: The requirement of compensation for board of directors service is limited. Air pollution control agencies are prohibited from paying board members for time spent serving on the board while they are being compensated as federal, state or local government employees in full-time positions. The provisions for payment of compensation to other board members and for reimbursement of actual and necessary expenses are preserved.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: A blanket prohibition against any compensation payment to board members is reduced in scope to apply only to public employees.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: Elimination of the compensation requirement would cure inequitable treatment of public members serving on interjurisdictional boards, reduce costs and preserve the concept of unpaid service by private citizens on volunteer boards. Service on air pollution boards should be no different than on other boards, which for many elected officials is a function of their office.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Bob Jacobs (pro).