

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5684

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Government Operations, March 4, 1997

Title: An act relating to prescribing procedures for decreasing fire protection district commissioners.

Brief Description: Prescribing procedures for decreasing fire protection district commissioners.

Sponsors: Senators Horn, Haugen and Wood.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Government Operations: 2/18/97, 3/4/97 [DPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5684 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators McCaslin, Chair; Hale, Vice Chair; Anderson, Haugen, Horn, Patterson and Swanson.

Staff: Eugene Green (786-7405)

Background: Initially, unless it consists wholly of personnel employed on a full-time, fully-paid basis, a fire protection district must have a board of three fire commissioners. Either by resolution of the commissioners or by a petition signed by 10 percent of the registered voters in the district who voted in the last general municipal election, a special election may be called to increase the number of commissioners from three to five. If the proposition receives a majority approval at the election, the commission is increased to five commissioners. A fire protection district consisting wholly of personnel employed on a full-time, fully-paid basis must have five commissioners.

There is no statutory authority allowing a five commissioner district to decrease to a three commissioner district.

Summary of Substitute Bill: Either by resolution of the commissioners or by a petition signed by 10 percent of the registered voters who voted in the last general municipal election, a special election may be called to decrease the board of fire commissioners from five members to three members. This procedure is not applicable to a fire protection district consisting wholly of personnel employed on a full-time, fully-paid, basis. If the fire protection district has commissioner districts, before submission of a proposition to the voters to decrease the board of fire commissioners, the board must pass a resolution to either redistrict from five commissioner districts to three commissioner districts or eliminate the commissioner districts. If the proposition receives a majority approval at the election, the commission is decreased to three commissioners.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The substitute bill exempts full-time, fully-paid departments and provides a procedure to reduce in size when the district has formed commissioner districts.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: Due to incorporation and annexations, some fire protection districts have been reduced in size and should be allowed to decrease from five to three commissioners.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Roger Ferris, Washington Fire Commissioner Association (pro); Jim Rudd, WSCFF (pro).