

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6698

As Passed Senate, February 14, 1998

Title: An act relating to the Washington state salary commission.

Brief Description: Revising timelines for the salary commission.

Sponsors: Senator McCaslin.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Government Operations: 2/5/98, 2/6/98 [DP].
Passed Senate, 2/14/98, 48-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators McCaslin, Chair; Hale, Vice Chair; Anderson, Haugen, Horn and T. Sheldon.

Staff: Diane Smith (786-7410)

Background: The 16-member state Salary Commission sets salaries for legislators, judges, and statewide elected officials. A new set of members to the commission is appointed every four years. Nine of the members are drawn by lot by the Secretary of State from voter lists in each of the nine congressional districts. The other seven members are selected by the leadership of the Legislature and forwarded by February 15 to the Governor for appointment to the commission. The terms of the current commission members expire in 1999, when a new set of members will be selected and appointed.

The commission members must organize themselves, hold hearings, determine the appropriate salaries, and file a salary schedule with the Secretary of State by the first Monday in June of the year the members are appointed, and by the first Monday in June two years later.

The statute which directs the commission to hold public hearings on the salaries is not clear. The commission, since its beginning, has held hearings and then set the salaries. In 1997, a superior court judge interpreted the statute governing the commission as requiring the commission to hold at least four public hearings on the schedule that is ultimately filed with the Secretary of State. The judge did not rule on whether public hearings on a proposed schedule, which is later modified, would meet this requirement.

Summary of Bill: Procedures governing the state Salary Commission are modified to require the commission to hold at least four public hearings on its proposed salary schedule. At the last public hearing on its proposed schedule, it must adopt the salary schedule that is filed with the Secretary of State.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: None.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: No one.

House Amendment(s): The House striking amendment makes technical clarifications.