

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SHB 2495

As Passed House:

February 19, 2002

Title: An act relating to updating outdated fire district statutes to increase efficiency.

Brief Description: Updating outdated fire district statutes to increase efficiency.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Finance (originally sponsored by Representatives Mulliken, Dunshee, Edwards, Miloscia and Casada).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Local Government & Housing: 1/30/02 [DP];

Finance: 2/11/02 [DPS].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 2/19/02, 97-0.

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Authorizes a fire district that contracts with another district that has at least one full-time, paid employee to utilize the additional 50 cent per thousand property tax for fire districts.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT & HOUSING

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 11 members: Representatives Dunshee, Chair; Edwards, Vice Chair; Mulliken, Ranking Minority Member; Berkey, Crouse, DeBolt, Dunn, Hatfield, Kirby, Mielke and Sullivan.

Staff: Scott MacColl (786-7106).

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 11 members: Representatives Gombosky, Chair; Berkey, Vice Chair; Cairnes, Ranking Minority Member; Conway, Morris, Nixon, Orcutt, Roach, Santos, Van Luven and Veloria.

Staff: Rick Peterson (786-7150).

Background:

Fire districts are authorized an additional property tax up to 50 cents per thousand above the general levy for fire districts, provided that it will not affect the rates of other taxing districts or cause the combined levies to exceed the constitutional limit.

The board of fire commissioners of any fire protection district may choose to levy the additional 50 cent property tax within a county where a township has never been formed or where there are one or more townships in existence making annual tax levies and the townships are disorganized as a result of a county-wide disorganization procedure prescribed by statute and is no longer making any tax levy.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

Fire districts that contract with another fire district that has at least one full-time, paid employee may choose to utilize the additional 50 cents per thousand property tax.

The fire district may utilize any part of the 50 cent levy if another taxing district agrees to release taxing units from their levies to the fire district.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not Requested.

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

Testimony For: (Local Government & Housing) This levy already takes place; the statute says that you have to have one full-time employee if you levy the additional tax. This bill allows a fire district to not have to employ a full time employee, but to contract with another district that does.

Testimony For: (Finance) Fire districts are looking for efficiencies. Fire districts are levying the \$.50 rate now. This bill will provide an incentive for districts to consolidate services and allow districts to spend tax dollars more wisely.

Testimony Against: (Local Government & Housing) None.

Testimony Against: (Finance) None.

Testified: (Local Government & Housing) Representative Mulliken; prime sponsor; and Ryan Spiller, Washington Fire Commissioners Association.

Testified: (Finance) Ryan Spiller, Washington Fire Commissioners Association.