

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 6600

As Reported by House Committee On:

Commerce & Labor

Title: An act relating to authorizing unclassified position appointments in city or town police departments.

Brief Description: Authorizing unclassified position appointments in city or town police departments.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Labor, Commerce & Financial Institutions (originally sponsored by Senator Prentice).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Commerce & Labor: 2/21/02, 2/26/02 [DPA].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill (As Amended by House Committee)

- Establishes the number of positions that may be exempt from civil service in municipal police departments.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE & LABOR

Majority Report: Do pass as amended. Signed by 7 members: Representatives Conway, Chair; Wood, Vice Chair; Clements, Ranking Minority Member; Chandler, Kenney, Lysen and McMorris.

Staff: Jill Reinmuth (786-7134).

Background:

State law requires that certain city, town, and municipal police departments operate under civil service systems. It specifies which municipalities are exempt from this requirement. It also specifies which employees are included in the classified civil service, and which employees may be exempt.

Municipalities with "full paid police departments" must provide for civil service in their

police departments. This requirement, however, does not apply to municipalities that provide for civil service in their police departments by local charter or other regulations. It also does not apply to municipalities with police departments of not more than two persons.

The civil service systems for covered police departments include all "full paid employees," including the police chief, with one exception. An individual appointed as police chief after July 1, 1987, to a department with six or more commissioned officers may be made exempt from civil service by the legislative body of the municipality.

State law similarly requires that county sheriff offices operate under civil service systems that apply to certain employees. The civil service systems for sheriff offices include all deputy sheriffs and other employees. The county sheriff and, depending on the total number of employees in the office, an additional number of positions are exempt from civil service.

Summary of Amended Bill:

State law specifying which police department employees are included in the classified civil service, and which may be exempt, is modified.

If the police chief of a department with six or more commissioned officers has been made exempt, the civil service system includes all "full paid employees" except the chief and a specified number of additional positions. The number of additional unclassified positions is determined by the number of department employees as follows:

- Departments with 6 to 10 employees may exempt 2 positions.
- Departments with 11 to 20 employees may exempt 3 positions.
- Departments with 21 to 50 employees may exempt 4 positions.
- Departments with 51 to 100 employees may exempt 5 positions.
- Departments with 101 to 250 employees may exempt 6 positions.
- Departments with 251 to 500 employees may exempt 8 positions.
- Departments with 501 or more employees may exempt 10 positions.

The additional unclassified positions may only be from the following positions: assistant chief, deputy chief, bureau commander, and administrative assistant or administrative secretary. The police chief initially designates which positions are unclassified, and notifies the Civil Service Commission (commission) of those positions. Any changes to those positions must be made with the concurrence of the chief, the mayor or city administrator, and the commission, and only after the commission has heard the issue in an open meeting.

A section declaring department employees serving in 1937 to be eligible for permanent

appointments to their positions is repealed.

Amended Bill Compared to Substitute Bill:

A conflict between SSB 6600 and an existing law specifying which police department employees are in classified civil service and which may be in the unclassified services is eliminated. A section dealing with police department employees serving in 1937 is repealed.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: This bill would give police chiefs and sheriffs the same ability to form their management teams.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Mike King, city of Anacortes Police Chief and Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs.