

***Local Government & Housing
Committee***

HB 1712

Brief Description: *Providing for the election of library trustees.*

Sponsors: *Representatives Mielke, Mulliken, Pennington, Dunn, Campbell, Boldt and Veloria.*

Brief Summary of Bill

- *Requires that library district trustees become elected positions , and provides for a process to change from appointed to elected trustees in existing districts at the 2002 general election.*
- *Authorizes library districts to divide the library district into trustee districts with equal populations represented.*

Hearing Date: *2/19/01*

Staff: *Scott MacColl (786-7106).*

Background:

Library districts may be established by a county, city or town either by an action of the legislative body, or by a vote required by a citizen petition. Along with county, city and town libraries, there are rural, rural partial-county, regional, intercounty rural, and Island library districts set up in statute.

Districts are managed by library trustees boards, made up of either five or seven members, and trustees earn no salary. For cities and towns, five trustees are appointed by the mayor with consent of the council. For counties, rural county library districts, and island library districts, five trustees are appointed by the county commissioners. In regional and intercounty library districts, the board is made up of either five or seven trustees, and are appointed by joint action of the legislative authorities involved.

Except for the initial terms, in districts with five trustees, terms are for five years. In districts with seven trustees, terms are for seven years. No trustee may serve for more than two consecutive terms.

Library trustees in cities and towns may be removed by a vote of the legislative authority. County, rural county, and island library district trustees may be removed for just cause by the county commissioners after a public hearing. Intercounty rural library district trustees may be removed by the joint action of the board of county commissioners of the counties involved.

Summary of Bill:

Requires that all library district trustees are elected positions for six year staggered terms of office. Procedures for the initial election, and initial terms of office are set forth. Initial library district trustee positions are elected without a primary, and are based only on the greatest number of votes received - for a five member district, the top five vote totals are elected as the trustees.

For trustee election filings after the initial elections, if only one person files for a trustee position that person is considered elected and no election is necessary.

Authorizes library district boards of trustees to divide the district into trustee districts of equal population size, and based on boundaries of precincts.

Requires the first election of library trustee districts in election as of July 1, 2001 take place at the 2002 general election. Any district created after July 1, 2001 must elect trustees according to this act.

Appropriation: *None.*

Fiscal Note: *Requested on February 1, 2001.*

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