

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2169

As Reported by House Committee On:
Local Government & Housing

Title: An act relating to fire districts' options for issuing warrants.

Brief Description: Issuing warrants by fire districts.

Sponsors: Representative Alexander.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Local Government & Housing: 1/14/02, 1/14/02 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Authorizes a fire district with an annual operating budget of under 5 million dollars in each of the last three years to issue its own warrants for payments of claims or obligations of the fire district, upon agreement with the county treasurer.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT & HOUSING

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 10 members: Representatives Dunshee, Democratic Chair; Edwards, Democratic Vice Chair; Berkey, Crouse, DeBolt, Dunn, Kirby, Mielke, Mulliken; and Sullivan.

Staff: Scott MacColl (786-7106).

Background:

Fire District warrants are orders by which the drawer authorizes one person to pay a particular sum of money. Fire district warrants are issued by the fire district secretary, who prepares and signs the vouchers, which are also signed and approved by a majority of the district board, and submits the vouchers to the county auditor. The auditor issues the warrants, and then sends them to the county treasurer for payment. Warrants are then paid by the county treasurer against proper funds of the district.

Fire districts that have had an annual operating budget of over 5 million for each of the last three years may adopt a policy by resolution to issue their own warrants for payments of claims or other obligations of the fire district. The board, after auditing all payrolls and bills, issues one general certificate to the county treasurer, authorizing the county treasurer to pay all the warrants specified, and the fund from which payment is to be made. The district secretary may then issued warrants specified in the general warrant.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

Fire districts that have had an annual operating budget of less than 5 million for each of the last three years, and upon agreement with the county treasurer, are authorized to adopt a policy to issue their own warrants for payments of claims or other obligations of the fire district.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

Replaces the county auditor with the county treasurer as the county officer that signs the agreement to allow the fire district to issue warrants.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not Requested.

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

Testimony For: County auditors process warrants for fire districts. Fire districts that have the funds and ability to manage their own money should be allowed to have this authority. Plus, their bills are paid quicker. The bill only allows the fire districts to have this authority with the approval of the county treasurer. The language needs a change that replaces the auditor with the treasurer.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: In Support: Ryan Spiller, Washington Fire Commissioners Association.

Opposed: None.