

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 1084

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
State & Local Government, March 26, 2001

Title: An act relating to independent commissions to set salaries for city and town elected officials, and county commissioners and councilmembers.

Brief Description: Authorizing independent salary commissions for cities, towns, and counties.

Sponsors: By Representatives Ogden (co-prime sponsor), Dunn (co-prime sponsor), Boldt and Fromhold.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: State & Local Government: 3/22/01, 3/26/01 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON STATE & LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Patterson, Chair; Fairley, Vice Chair; Gardner, Hale, Horn, McCaslin and Swecker.

Staff: Aaron Jennings (786-7445)

Background: The Washington Citizens' Commission on Salaries for Elected Officials was created by initiative in 1986. The commission establishes salaries for state-elected officials. Members are appointed: (1) by both chambers of the Legislature with the approval of the Governor; and (2) at random from each of the nine congressional districts. There is no explicit statutory authorization for independent salary commissions for city or county elected officials.

Summary of Bill: Independent salary commissions are authorized to establish salaries for city or town elected officials and for county elected officials.

Salaries of city and town elected officials may be set by salary commissions in accordance with city charter or by ordinance. The members of these local salary commissions are appointed by the mayor with the approval of the city council.

Counties are authorized to establish ten member independent salary commissions for county commissioners and council members by ordinance or by resolution of the county legislative authority. Six members are selected at random by the county auditor from the list of registered voters in the district. The remaining four members are appointed by the county executive or commissioner, or by a majority vote of the county legislative authority. These four members must have experience in the personnel management field, and represent each of the following four sectors: business, professional personnel management, legal, and organized labor.

Changes in salary adopted by the commission become effective and are incorporated into the city or county budget without further action of the city or county council. Salary increases become effective immediately, while salary decreases become effective when the current official's term of office has ended.

Any increase or decrease in salary is subject to a referendum petition by the people of the city, town or county, and then submitted to the voters in the next general or municipal election.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: This bill is requested by the city of Vancouver. It is uncertain if cities and counties have the authority to create salary commissions. This bill would give cities and counties the option of having a salary commission.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: Representative Ogden, prime sponsor; Mark Brown, City of Vancouver; Bill Vogler, Association of Counties.