

SENATE BILL REPORT

HJR 4220

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
State & Local Government, February 28, 2002
Ways & Means, March 4, 2002

Brief Description: Amending the Constitution to restrict the number of years excess levies by fire protection districts can be made.

Sponsors: Representatives Dunshee and Mulliken.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: State & Local Government: 2/25/02, 2/28/02 [DP-WM].
Ways & Means: 3/4/02 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON STATE & LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Majority Report: Do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators Gardner, Chair; Fairley, Vice Chair; Hale, Keiser, Kline, T. Sheldon and Swecker.

Staff: Eugene Green (786-7405)

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Brown, Chair; Regala, Vice Chair; Fairley, Vice Chair; Fraser, Hewitt, Honeyford, Kline, Kohl-Welles, Long, Parlette, Poulsen, Rasmussen, Rossi, B. Sheldon, Snyder, Spanel, Thibaudeau and Winsley.

Staff: Terry Wilson (786-7433)

Background: Article VII, Section 2, of the State Constitution limits the aggregate of all tax levies upon real and personal property by the state and all taxing districts in any year to no more than 1 percent of the true and fair value of such property. This limitation may be exceeded at a "special" or excess levy election, by which any taxing district, when specifically authorized to do so by a majority of at least three-fifths of the voters of the taxing district on the proposition may levy an additional tax for one year (if the voter turnout equals at least 40 percent of the previous general election turnout). An exception to the one-year special levy limit are those levies for the support of common schools. Any proposition to levy additional tax for the support of common schools may provide such support for a period of up to four years and any proposition to levy an additional tax to support the construction, modernization, or remodeling of school facilities may provide such support for a period not exceeding six years.

Summary of Bill: Fire protection districts, when specifically authorized to do so by a majority of at least three-fifths of the voters of the taxing district on the proposition (if the voter turnout equals at least 40 percent of the previous general election turnout) may levy an additional tax for a period of up to four years for general purposes and for a period of up to six years for the construction, modernization, or remodeling of facilities, as specified in the ballot proposition.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: Upon approval of the voters at the November 2002 general election.

Testimony For (State & Local Government): This will let us plan better. It will result in cost savings.

Testimony Against (State & Local Government): None.

Testified (State & Local Government): Ryan Spiller, Fire Districts (pro).

Testimony For (Ways & Means): This is an important tool for fire districts. It provides a longer term funding source. It is more efficient. More time can be spent fighting fires.

Testimony Against (Ways & Means): None.

Testified (Ways & Means): Ryan Spiller, WA Fire Commissioners Assn.