

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5065

As Passed Senate, February 28, 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: Senators McCaslin, Carlson, Patterson and Johnson.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: State & Local Government: 1/24/01, 1/31/01 [DP].

Passed Senate: 2/28/01, 47-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON STATE & LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Patterson, Chair; Fairley, Vice Chair; Hale, Haugen, Horn, T. Sheldon 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.

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: Several charter cities and counties already have independent salary commissions, but their legality has been questioned.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: Mark Brown, City of Vancouver; Bill Vogler, Washington State Association Counties.