
SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 5238

State of Washington

57th Legislature

2001 Regular Session

By Senate Committee on Human Services & Corrections (originally sponsored by Senators Patterson, Johnson, McCaslin, Haugen and Fairley)

READ FIRST TIME 2/05/01.

1 AN ACT Relating to the board of commissioners of a water-sewer
2 district; amending RCW 57.12.010, 57.12.015, and 57.12.039; and adding
3 a new section to chapter 57.12 RCW.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 **Sec. 1.** RCW 57.12.010 and 1998 c 121 s 5 are each amended to read
6 as follows:

7 The governing body of a district shall be a board of commissioners
8 consisting of three members, or five or seven members as provided in
9 RCW 57.12.015(~~(, or more, as provided in the event of merger or~~
10 ~~consolidation)~~). The board shall annually elect one of its members as
11 president and another as secretary.

12 The board shall by resolution adopt rules governing the transaction
13 of its business and shall adopt an official seal. All proceedings
14 shall be by resolution recorded in a book kept for that purpose which
15 shall be a public record.

16 A district shall provide by resolution for the payment of
17 compensation to each of its commissioners at a rate of seventy dollars
18 for each day or portion thereof devoted to the business of the
19 district. However the compensation for each commissioner shall not

1 exceed six thousand seven hundred twenty dollars per year. In
2 addition, the secretary may be paid a reasonable sum for clerical
3 services.

4 Any commissioner may waive all or any portion of his or her
5 compensation payable under this section as to any month or months
6 during the commissioner's term of office, by a written waiver filed
7 with the district at any time after the commissioner's election and
8 prior to the date on which the compensation would otherwise be paid.
9 The waiver shall specify the month or period of months for which it is
10 made.

11 No commissioner shall be employed full time by the district. A
12 commissioner shall be reimbursed for reasonable expenses actually
13 incurred in connection with district business, including subsistence
14 and lodging while away from the commissioner's place of residence and
15 mileage for use of a privately-owned vehicle at the mileage rate
16 authorized in RCW 43.03.060.

17 **Sec. 2.** RCW 57.12.015 and 1996 c 230 s 402 are each amended to
18 read as follows:

19 (1) In the event a three-member board of commissioners of any
20 district with any number of customers determines by resolution that it
21 would be in the best interest of the district to increase the number of
22 commissioners from three to five, or if the board of a district with
23 any number of customers is presented with a petition signed by ten
24 percent of the registered voters resident within the district who voted
25 in the last general municipal election calling for an increase in the
26 number of commissioners of the district, the board shall submit a
27 resolution to the county auditor requesting that an election be held.
28 Upon receipt of the resolution, the county auditor shall call a special
29 election to be held within the district, at which election a
30 proposition in substantially the following language shall be submitted
31 to the voters:

32 Shall the Board of Commissioners of (name and/or number of
33 district) be increased from three to five members?

34 Yes

35 No

1 If the proposition receives a majority approval at the election the
2 board of commissioners of the district shall be increased to five
3 members.

4 (2) In any district with more than ten thousand customers, if a
5 three-member board of commissioners determines by resolution that it
6 would be in the best interest of the district to increase the number of
7 commissioners from three to five, the number of commissioners shall be
8 so increased without an election, unless within ninety days of adoption
9 of that resolution a petition requesting an election and signed by at
10 least ten percent of the registered voters who voted in the last
11 municipal general election is filed with the board. If such a petition
12 is received, the board shall submit the resolution and the petition to
13 the county auditor, who shall call a special election in the manner
14 described in this section.

15 (3)(a) In any district with more than twenty-five thousand
16 customers, if a five-member board of commissioners determines by
17 resolution that it would be in the best interest of the district to
18 increase the number of commissioners from five to seven, the number of
19 commissioners may be so increased without an election, unless within
20 ninety days of adoption of that resolution a petition requesting an
21 election and signed by at least ten percent of the registered voters
22 who voted in the last municipal general election is filed with the
23 board. If such a petition is received, the board shall submit the
24 resolution and the petition to the county auditor, who shall call a
25 special election in the manner described in this section.

26 (b) In the event a five-member board of commissioners of any
27 district with more than twenty-five thousand customers determines by
28 resolution that it would be in the best interest of the district to
29 increase the number of commissioners from five to seven, the board may
30 submit a resolution to the county auditor requesting that an election
31 be held. Upon receipt of the resolution, the county auditor shall call
32 a special election to be held within the district, at which election a
33 proposition in substantially the following language shall be submitted
34 to the voters:

35 Shall the Board of Commissioners of (name and/or number of
36 district) be increased from five to seven members?

37 Yes

38 No

1 If the proposition receives a majority approval at the election the
2 board of commissioners of the district shall be increased to seven
3 members.

4 (4) The two additional positions created on boards of commissioners
5 by this section shall be filled initially as for a vacancy, except that
6 the appointees shall draw lots, one appointee to serve until the next
7 district general election after the appointment, at which two
8 commissioners shall be elected for six-year terms, and the other
9 appointee to serve until the second district general election after the
10 appointment, at which two commissioners shall be elected for six-year
11 terms.

12 NEW SECTION. Sec. 3. A new section is added to chapter 57.12 RCW
13 to read as follows:

14 (1) Except as provided in RCW 52.14.020, in the event a five-member
15 or seven-member board of commissioners of any district determines by
16 resolution that it would be in the best interest of the district to
17 decrease the number of commissioners from five to three, or from seven
18 to five, or in the event the board is presented with a petition signed
19 by ten percent of the registered voters resident within the district
20 who voted in the last general municipal election calling for such a
21 decrease in the number of commissioners of the district, the board
22 shall submit a resolution to the county legislative authority or
23 authorities of the county or counties in which the district is located
24 requesting that an election be held. Upon receipt of the resolution,
25 the legislative authority or authorities of the county or counties
26 shall call a special election to be held within the district at which
27 election the following proposition shall be submitted to the voters
28 substantially as follows:

29 Shall the board of commissioners of (name and/or number of
30 district) be decreased from (five/seven) members to (three/five)
31 members?

32 Yes . . .

33 No . . .

34 If the district has commissioner districts, the commissioners of
35 the district must pass a resolution, before the submission of the
36 proposition to the voters, to either redistrict from five commissioner
37 districts to three commissioner districts, or from seven commissioner

1 districts to five commissioner districts, or eliminate the commissioner
2 districts. The resolution takes effect upon approval of the
3 proposition by the voters.

4 If the proposition receives a majority approval at the election,
5 the board of commissioners of the district shall be decreased to three
6 or five members.

7 (2) The number of members on the board of the district shall be
8 reduced by one whenever a commissioner resigns from office or a vacancy
9 otherwise occurs on the board, until the number of remaining members is
10 reduced to the number of members that is chosen for the board
11 eventually to have. The reduction of membership on the board shall not
12 be considered to be a vacancy that is to be filled until the number of
13 remaining members is less than the number of members on the board that
14 is chosen for the board eventually to have.

15 (3) At the next three district general elections after the
16 reduction is approved, the number of commissioners for the district
17 that are elected shall be as follows, notwithstanding the number of
18 commissioners whose terms expire:

19 (a) In the first election after the reduction, only one position
20 shall be filled.

21 (b) In the second election, one position shall be filled.

22 Thereafter, the commissioners shall be elected in the same manner
23 as prescribed for such districts of the state.

24 **Sec. 4.** RCW 57.12.039 and 1996 c 230 s 404 are each amended to
25 read as follows:

26 (1) Notwithstanding RCW 57.12.020 and 57.12.030, the board of
27 commissioners may provide by majority vote that subsequent
28 commissioners be elected from commissioner districts within the
29 district. If the board exercises this option, it shall divide the
30 district into three, ~~((or))~~ five, or seven if the number of
31 commissioners has been increased under RCW 57.12.015, commissioner
32 districts of approximately equal population following current precinct
33 and district boundaries.

34 (2) Commissioner districts shall be used as follows: (a) Only a
35 registered voter who resides in a commissioner district may be a
36 candidate for, or serve as, a commissioner of the commissioner
37 district; and (b) only voters of a commissioner district may vote at a
38 primary to nominate candidates for a commissioner of the commissioner

1 district. Voters of the entire district may vote at a general election
2 to elect a person as a commissioner of the commissioner district.
3 Commissioner districts shall be redrawn as provided in chapter 29.70
4 RCW.

5 (3) In districts in which commissioners are nominated from
6 commissioner districts, at the inception of a five-member or a seven-
7 member board of commissioners, the new commissioner districts shall be
8 numbered one through five or one through seven and the ~~((three))~~
9 incumbent commissioners shall represent up to five commissioner
10 districts ~~((one through three))~~ depending on the amount of
11 commissioners. If, as a result of redrawing the district boundaries
12 two or three of the incumbent commissioners reside in one of the new
13 commissioner districts, the commissioners who reside in the same
14 commissioner district shall determine by lot which of the first three
15 or five numbered commissioner districts they shall represent for the
16 remainder of their respective terms. A primary shall be held to
17 nominate candidates from the remaining districts ~~((four and five))~~
18 where necessary and commissioners shall be elected at large at the
19 general election. The persons elected as commissioners from the
20 remaining commissioner districts ~~((four and five))~~ shall take office
21 immediately after qualification as defined under RCW 29.01.135.

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