

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 5063

As Reported by House Committee On:
Local Government

Title: An act relating to flood control zone districts.

Brief Description: Providing for elections for flood control zone district supervisors.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Government Operations & Elections (originally sponsored by Senators Doumit, Zarelli and Rasmussen).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Local Government: 3/20/03, 3/31/03 [DPA].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill
(As Amended by House Committee)

- Allows residents of a flood control zone district to elect a board of supervisors other than the county legislative authority to manage the district.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Majority Report: Do pass as amended. Signed by 10 members: Representatives Romero, Chair; Schindler, Ranking Minority Member; Jarrett, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Ahern, Berkey, Clibborn, Edwards, Ericksen, Mielke and Moeller.

Staff: Amy Wood (786-7127).

Background:

Flood control zone districts are special purpose districts that operate as quasi-municipal corporations. Their purpose is to pursue flood control activities that benefit specified areas of the whole county. Flood control zone districts are governed by a "board of supervisors" who are members of the county legislative authority and have the power of condemnation. They are funded by a property tax, benefit assessments, service charges, voluntary assessments, and bonds. Flood control zone districts are administered by the county engineer.

Summary of Amended Bill:

A flood control zone district with more than 2,000 residents may choose to elect the board of supervisors for the district. The election may be held upon resolution of the county legislative authority or upon petition submitted to the county auditor of 15 percent or more of the registered voters within the zone. Three elected zone supervisors are elected at large, without primary, for six-year staggered terms. The person receiving the greatest number of votes for each position is elected.

Amended Bill Compared to Substitute Bill:

The emergency clause is removed; the bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not Requested. Available on companion HB 1291.

Effective Date of Amended Bill: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: The flood assessment is very high in Cowlitz County due to the silt problem as a result of the eruption of Mount St. Helens. Constituents in the district are concerned with the maintenance issues. There are no members on the current Board of Supervisors who reside in the district. Citizens want to make their own decisions on the issues and need a board which resides in the area that understands the special needs of the district. The best governance comes from those who live in these unique areas, walk the dikes, and know the streams.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Senator Doumit, prime sponsor; and George Raiter, Cowlitz County Commissioner.