SENATE BILL REPORT
SB 5244

As Passed Senate, February 18, 2003

Title: An act relating to powers of unclassified cities.

Brief Description: Authorizing additional powers for unclassified cities.

Sponsors: Senator Hewitt.

Brief History:
  Committee Activity: Government Operations & Elections: 1/29/03 [DP].
  Passed Senate: 2/18/03, 49-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & ELECTIONS

Majority Report: Do pass.
    Signed by Senators Roach, Chair; Kastama, McCaslin and Reardon.

Staff: Mac Nicholson (786-7445)

Background: An unclassified city is a city created by special charter prior to the adoption of the state Constitution and not since reincorporated under any general statute. There is a statute in the law granting unclassified cities certain powers, in addition to the powers granted by their charter. The only unclassified city existing in the state today is Waitsburg, which was created by territorial charter in 1885. Waitsburg's charter calls for the annual election of city officials.

Summary of Bill: The legislative body of an unclassified city can adopt, by resolution, any powers granted to code cities, including the power to define the functions and duties of city officers and employees.

The legislative body of an unclassified city can adopt a resolution implementing a four-year election cycle for city officials, with elections held biennially in odd-numbered years. At the first election under the bill, the terms of the city officers shall be staggered, with a majority of council members elected to four-year terms, and the remaining council members and the treasurer elected to two-year terms.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: Annual elections in Waitsburg cost the city too much money and the city needs the authority to implement a four year election cycle.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: Senator Mike Hewitt.