

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5447

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As Reported By Senate Committee On:  
Government Operations & Elections, February 7, 2003

**Title:** An act relating to city assumption of water-sewer districts.

**Brief Description:** Requiring voter approval of certain city assumptions of water-sewer districts.

**Sponsors:** Senators Roach, T. Sheldon, Stevens, Mulliken, Kastama, McCaslin and Schmidt.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Government Operations & Elections: 2/7/03 [DP].

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & ELECTIONS

**Majority Report:** Do pass.

Signed by Senators Roach, Chair; Stevens, Vice Chair; Kastama, McCaslin and Reardon.

**Staff:** Mac Nicholson (786-7445)

**Background:** A city can unilaterally assume jurisdiction of all or part of a water-sewer district, depending on how much area or assessed value of the district is located within the city boundary. If the entire district is located within the city, the city can assume the entire district. If 60 percent or more of the district territory is within the city, the city can assume that portion of the entire district not included within a different city. Similarly, if 60 percent of the assessed valuation of the real property in the district is located within the city, the city can assume that portion of the entire district not included within a different city.

If less than 60 percent of district territory and less than 60 percent of the assessed valuation of the real property in the district is located within a city, the city can assume only that part of the district located within the city. The district can elect, however, upon a vote of the entire district, to require the city to assume the responsibility for the operation and maintenance of the district's property, facilities and equipment.

When more than one city is included within a district, the city which contains 60 percent or more of the assessed valuation of the district may assume responsibility for operation and maintenance of the entire district, provided any other cities in the district approve.

**Summary of Bill:** A city cannot assume all or part of a water-sewer district serving more than 30,000 and containing the territory of four or more cities, or three cities and unincorporated territory of more than 500 acres, unless voters of the entire district approve a ballot proposition authorizing the assumption. The cost of the election is borne by the city seeking to assume jurisdiction of the district.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

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

**Testimony For:** Hostile assumptions are not fair and this bill gives voters of water-sewer districts a voice in the assumption process. Voters created the district and should have a say in what happens to the district.

**Testimony Against:** Local jurisdictions should work out problems at the local level and the state should not get involved. This bill makes assumptions of water-sewer districts by cities difficult by requiring another procedural step.

**Testified:** PRO: Joe Daniels and Hal Schlomann, WA Assn. of Sewer-Water Districts; Phil Watkins, Bev Tweddle and Don Miller, Lakehaven Utility District; Ray Schow; Steve Lindstrom, Sno-King Water District Coalition. CON: Jeanne Burbidge, Mayor of Federal Way; Bob Mack, City of Bellevue.