

SENATE BILL REPORT

SJR 8208

As Passed Senate, February 10, 2004

Brief Description: Amending the Constitution to allow multiyear excess property tax levies for cemetery districts.

Sponsors: Senator Morton.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Government Operations & Elections: 1/28/03 [DP].

Passed Senate: 3/7/03, 49-0; 2/10/04, 47-2.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & ELECTIONS

Majority Report: Do pass.

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

Staff: Diane Smith (786-7410)

Background: The Washington State Constitution specifies that propositions to levy additional taxes for operating costs of cemetery protection districts must limit the levy to a period of one year. An amendment to change the state Constitution must be approved by a two-thirds majority of both houses of the Legislature, followed by a majority of the people.

Summary of Bill: A constitutional amendment is proposed to increase the one-year period for authorizing a cemetery protection district operating levy. Propositions to levy additional taxes for cemetery protection districts may allow the levy period to be up to four years in regard to operating purposes and up to six years for the construction, modernization, or remodeling of facilities.

The Secretary of State is directed to give proper notice of a constitutional amendment to be ratified by the people.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The resolution takes effect upon approval of the voters at the November 2003 general election.

Testimony For: Small towns in rural areas with few resources are experiencing large numbers of deaths. The bill will improve rural towns' ability to plan for the future by building new cemeteries based on population numbers.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Senator Morton, prime sponsor (pro).

House Amendment(s): The amendment adds metropolitan park districts and library districts to the list of special purpose districts that may ask the voters to approve multi-year excess levies.