
SENATE BILL 6504

State of Washington

59th Legislature

2006 Regular Session

By Senators Berkey and Mulliken

Read first time 01/13/2006. Referred to Committee on Government Operations & Elections.

1 AN ACT Relating to prohibiting employees of public hospital
2 districts from serving as commissioners; and amending RCW 70.44.040.

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

4 **Sec. 1.** RCW 70.44.040 and 1997 c 99 s 1 are each amended to read
5 as follows:

6 (1) The provisions of Title ((29)) 29A RCW relating to elections
7 shall govern public hospital districts, except as provided in this
8 chapter.

9 A public hospital district shall be created when the ballot
10 proposition authorizing the creation of the district is approved by a
11 simple majority vote of the voters of the proposed district voting on
12 the proposition and the total vote cast upon the proposition exceeds
13 forty percent of the total number of votes cast in the proposed
14 district at the preceding state general election.

15 A public hospital district initially may be created with three,
16 five, or seven commissioner districts. At the election at which the
17 proposition is submitted to the voters as to whether a district shall
18 be formed, three, five, or seven commissioners shall be elected from
19 either three, five, or seven commissioner districts, or at-large

1 positions, or both, as determined by resolution of the county
2 commissioners of the county or counties in which the proposed public
3 hospital district is located, all in accordance with RCW 70.44.054.
4 The election of the initial commissioners shall be null and void if the
5 district is not authorized to be created.

6 No primary shall be held. A special filing period shall be opened
7 as provided in RCW ((~~29.15.170~~ and ~~29.15.180~~)) 29A.24.171 and
8 29A.24.181. The person receiving the greatest number of votes for the
9 commissioner of each commissioner district or at-large position shall
10 be elected as the commissioner of that district. The terms of office
11 of the initial public hospital district commissioners shall be
12 staggered, with the length of the terms assigned so that the person or
13 persons who are elected receiving the greater number of votes being
14 assigned a longer term or terms of office and each term of an initial
15 commissioner running until a successor assumes office who is elected at
16 one of the next three following district general elections the first of
17 which occurs at least one hundred twenty days after the date of the
18 election where voters approved the ballot proposition creating the
19 district, as follows:

20 (a) If the public hospital district will have three commissioners,
21 the successor to one initial commissioner shall be elected at such
22 first following district general election, the successor to one initial
23 commissioner shall be elected at the second following district general
24 election, and the successor to one initial commissioner shall be
25 elected at the third following district general election;

26 (b) If the public hospital district will have five commissioners,
27 the successor to one initial commissioner shall be elected at such
28 first following district general election, the successors to two
29 initial commissioners shall be elected at the second following district
30 general election, and the successors to two initial commissioners shall
31 be elected at the third following district general election;

32 (c) If the public hospital district will have seven commissioners,
33 the successors to two initial commissioners shall be elected at such
34 first following district general election, the successors to ((~~three~~
35 ~~{two}~~)) two initial commissioners shall be elected at the second
36 following district general election, and the successors to three
37 initial commissioners shall be elected at the third following district
38 general election.

1 The initial commissioners shall take office immediately when they
2 are elected and qualified. The term of office of each successor shall
3 be six years. Each commissioner shall serve until a successor is
4 elected and qualified and assumes office in accordance with RCW
5 (~~29.04.170~~) 29A.20.040.

6 (2) Only a registered voter who resides in a commissioner district
7 may be a candidate for, or hold office as, a commissioner of the
8 commissioner district. Voters of the entire public hospital district
9 may vote at a primary or general election to elect a person as a
10 commissioner of the commissioner district.

11 If the proposed public hospital district initially will have three
12 commissioner districts and the public hospital district is county-wide,
13 and if the county has three county legislative authority districts, the
14 county legislative authority districts shall be used as public hospital
15 district commissioner districts. In all other instances the county
16 auditor of the county in which all or the largest portion of the
17 proposed public hospital district is located shall draw the initial
18 public hospital district commissioner districts and designate at-large
19 positions, if appropriate, as provided in RCW 70.44.054. Each of the
20 commissioner positions shall be numbered consecutively and associated
21 with the commissioner district or at-large position of the same number.

22 The commissioners of a public hospital district that is not
23 coterminous with the boundaries of a county that has three county
24 legislative authority districts shall at the times required in chapter
25 (~~29.70~~) 29A.76 RCW and may from time to time redraw commissioner
26 district boundaries in a manner consistent with chapter (~~29.70~~)
27 29A.76 RCW.

28 (3) No person may hold office as a commissioner while serving as an
29 employee of the public hospital district.

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