

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2483

As Reported by House Committee On:
Local Government

Title: An act relating to assessed valuation requirements for the direct petition method of annexation.

Brief Description: Modifying assessed valuation requirements for the direct petition method of annexation.

Sponsors: Representatives Moeller and Dunn.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Local Government: 1/15/08 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Lowers the assessed property valuation requirement for direct petition annexations in cities and towns from 75 to 60 percent.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 4 members: Representatives Simpson, Chair; Takko, Vice Chair; Eddy and Nelson.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 3 members: Representatives Warnick, Ranking Minority Member; Schindler, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Schmick.

Staff: Lyset Cadena (786-7291); Ethan Moreno (786-7386).

Background:

Multiple methods for city and town annexations are currently authorized. A summary of the methods are as follows:

- election method by resolution - requires approval of city or town resolutions by voters residing in the proposed annexation area;
- election method by petition - includes initiatives petitioned by and approved by the voters residing in the proposed annexation area;

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- resolution method only - includes annexations for municipal purposes approved by a majority of the city or town legislative body, or other actions not requiring voter or property owner action; and
- direct petition method - requires approval of direct petitions signed by property owners comprising a specific percentage of land value without voter action.

The direct petition method annexation proceedings are commenced by filing a written notice of intention to the city or town legislative body. A notice indicates an intent to begin the annexation process which must be signed by the owners of at least 10 percent in value of the property for which annexation is sought. The petition must be signed by the owners of at least 75 percent of the land value of the property proposed for annexation.

Prior to the circulation of annexation petitions, the legislative body of the city or town is required to meet with the initiating parties to determine whether the city or town will accept, reject, or modify the proposed annexation. There is no appeal from the decision of the legislative body.

Following the filing of the required signatures with the petitioned city or town, the city or town legislative body may set a date for a public hearing on the annexation proposal. Notification of the hearing must be published in a local newspaper of general circulation and posted in the proposed annexation territory. If the city or town legislative body decided to annex any or all of the territory described in the petition, it must do so by adopting an ordinance that also establishes the annexation effective date.

Summary of Bill:

The direct petition method annexation proceedings allow for a petition to be signed by the owners of at least 60 percent of the land value of the property proposed for annexation.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) An issue of fairness for cities has arisen since some cities must collect signatures from owners of at least 75 percent of the land value for annexation, while others must only meet a 60 percent requirement. Some cities have experienced difficulty in attaining signatures from owners of at least 75 percent of the land value and the current requirement has hindered annexation procedures. Changing the 75 percent requirement to 60 percent would establish a uniform standard for all cities, and would help counties and cities move forward with any annexation procedures.

Persons Testifying: Representative Moeller, prime sponsor; Suzan C. Wallace, City of Vancouver; Dave Williams, Association of Washington Cities; and Steve Stuart, Clark County.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.