
Appropriations Committee

SSB 6297

Brief Description: Changing elected prosecuting attorney salaries.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Prentice, Brandland and Sheldon).

<p>Brief Summary of Substitute Bill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Changes elected prosecuting attorney salaries.

Hearing Date:

Staff: Owen Rowe (786-7391).

Background:

Article 11, Section 5 of the Washington Constitution specifies that the Legislature must regulate the compensation of elected county officials, including the elected prosecuting attorneys. The same section allows the Legislature to delegate to county legislative authorities the authority to set the salaries of its own members and other county officers. Since 1971, the Legislature has delegated this responsibility to the county in statute. Additionally, the same statute also requires the state to pay one-half of the salaries of each elected county prosecuting attorney. The Office of the State Treasurer currently remits the state's share to the counties. In 2008, the salary for the elected county prosecuting attorneys ranged from a maximum of \$155,694 in King County to a minimum of \$52,588 in Garfield County; the average being \$106,764.

Under RCW 2.08.092, the annual salary of a superior court judge is set by the Washington Citizens' Commission on Salaries for Elected Officials. For 2008, the superior court judges salary has been set at \$140,979.

Summary of Bill:

Effective July 1, 2008, the state must contribute an amount equal to one-half of the salary of a Superior Court judge towards the salary for the county's elected prosecuting attorney. Upon receipt of the state's contribution, each county must continue to contribute an amount equal to or

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greater than the amount it contributed in 2008 towards the elected county prosecutor's salary. The requirement that the state pay half of the salary of the elected prosecuting attorney is removed.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect on July 1, 2008.