

SENATE BILL REPORT

SSB 5674

As Amended by House, March 30, 2007

Title: An act relating to water district commissioner candidates.

Brief Description: Authorizing registered voters who reside outside of, but own land in, a water district to be elected as a water district commissioner.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Government Operations & Elections (originally sponsored by Senators Haugen, Fairley and Kline).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Government Operations & Elections: 2/06/07, 2/08/07 [DPS].
Passed Senate: 3/06/07, 46-1.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & ELECTIONS

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5674 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Fairley, Chair; Oemig, Vice Chair; Roach, Ranking Minority Member; Benton, Kline, Pridemore and Swecker.

Staff: Mac Nicholson (786-7445)

Background: The board of commissioners of a water-sewer district, with a majority vote, may decide that subsequent commissioners be elected from commissioner districts. In such commissioner districts, only registered voters who reside in the commissioner district may be a candidate for, or serve as, commissioner of the district. Candidates for commissioner of a commissioner district are nominated at the primary by voters of the commissioner district, but voters of the entire water-sewer district vote on the candidates at the general election.

In nonpartisan races, the filing period will be reopened for three days if no candidates have filed for office, or if all candidates who have filed are disqualified, or if a vacancy occurs leaving an unexpired term to be filled by an election for which filings have not been held.

Summary of Substitute Bill: In water-sewer districts with fewer than one hundred residents, if the filing period is reopened for a district commissioner, any registered voter who resides or holds title or evidence of title to land in the district may file as a district commissioner candidate.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: There's a district in the San Juan Islands that has very few residents living in the district year round, making it difficult to find water district commissioners. This bill will just allow people who own land in the district to serve as a commissioner if residents of the district don't want to serve.

Persons Testifying: Senator Haugen, prime sponsor; Joe Daniels, Washington Association of Sewer and Water Districts.

House Amendment(s): Adds a provision to the election statutes allowing a void in candidacy to be filled in accordance with the legislation.