

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 2456

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Government Operations & Elections, February 25, 2010

Title: An act relating to population thresholds that determine the number of local councilmembers and receipt of local funds.

Brief Description: Concerning population thresholds that determine the number of local councilmembers and receipt of local funds.

Sponsors: Representatives Schmick, Springer, Short and Fagan.

Brief History: Passed House: 2/05/10, 97-0.

Committee Activity: Government Operations & Elections: 2/25/10 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & ELECTIONS

Majority Report: Do pass.

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

Staff: Alison Mendiola (786-7483)

Background: Population Thresholds and City Council Membership. A code city that adopts the mayor-council plan of government is subject to statutes regulating the number of city council members it may have in accordance with specified population thresholds. Subject to specified exceptions, the general rule is that the greater a city's population the more council members it must have.

For the purpose of determining such population thresholds, the population of a code city is determined by reference to either the most recent state or federal census, or the population statistics compiled by the Office of Financial Management.

State law is silent as to whether the inmates of a state correctional facility located within a code city or town may be counted as part of the population threshold determination.

Small City Pavement and Sidewalk Account. Cities and towns with a population of less than 5,000 are eligible to receive funding from the Small City Pavement and Sidewalk Account

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.

(Account). Funding is made available through the Account for the maintenance, repair, and resurfacing of city streets.

State law is silent as to whether the inmates of a state correctional facility located within a city may be counted in determining whether the city meets population requirements for the receipt of funding under the Account.

Summary of Bill: A code city or town with a mayor-council form of government may include the population of any state correctional facility within its jurisdiction in calculating the population thresholds pertinent to determining the requisite number of city council members.

In determining its eligibility to obtain funding from the Account, a city or town may include the population of any state correctional facility within its jurisdiction in calculating the population thresholds relevant to such eligibility.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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: In small cities such as Connell, it can be a challenge to find people to run for city council. If the inmate population of Coyote Ridge is required to be counted, it would require the city of Connell to increase its city council by two members. Also, adding two council members would be expensive and require chambers to be rebuilt. Also, if inmate populations are required to be counted, two cities, Connell and Airway Heights, would no longer be eligible for funding from the Small City and Sidewalk Account. This is a good bill, limited in scope.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Representative Schmick, prime sponsor; Steve Taylor, city of Connell.