

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 1078

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### As Reported by House Committee On: Government Operations & Elections

**Title:** An act relating to requiring the ballot proposition to reduce the terms of office of port commissioners to be submitted at the next general election.

**Brief Description:** Requiring the ballot proposition to reduce the terms of office of port commissioners to be submitted at the next general election.

**Sponsors:** Representative Appleton.

#### **Brief History:**

##### **Committee Activity:**

Government Operations & Elections: 1/30/13, 2/7/13 [DP].

#### **Brief Summary of Bill**

- Requires ballot propositions to reduce the terms of office of port commissioners to be submitted for a vote at the general election.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & ELECTIONS

**Majority Report:** Do pass. Signed by 10 members: Representatives Hunt, Chair; Bergquist, Vice Chair; Buys, Ranking Minority Member; Taylor, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Alexander, Carlyle, Fitzgibbon, Kristiansen, Manweller and Orwall.

**Staff:** Marsha Reilly (786-7135).

#### **Background:**

A port district is governed by a three-member board of commissioners elected to staggered six- or four-year terms of office, with one commissioner being elected in each odd-year general election. Voters of a port district with a population of 500,000 or more may authorize the size of the board of commissioners to be increased to five members. The ports of Seattle and Tacoma are the only ports with a population of 500,000 or more, and both have a five-member board of commissioners.

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*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.*

The terms of office for port commissioners of each countywide port district with a population of 100,000 or more is four years, and either six or four years in all other port districts. The six-year term of office may be changed to a four-year term upon either a resolution of the port commissioners or petition by the voters of the port district. The signatures required for a petition must be at least 10 percent of the number of voters in the port district voting at the last general election. The ballot proposition must be submitted to the voters for approval at the next general or special election that occurs 60 or more days after the adoption of the resolution or submission of the petition.

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**Summary of Bill:**

Ballot propositions to reduce the term of office of port commissioners may no longer be submitted for a vote at a special election.

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**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

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

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) A petition to change the terms of office of port commissioners in a small district was submitted right after a general election which required that the measure be voted on at the next special election. The cost to this port district was substantial. The bill saves money for elections and is consistent with other elections throughout the state.

(Opposed) None.

**Persons Testifying:** Representative Appleton, prime sponsor; and Eric Johnson, Washington Public Ports Association.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.