
Local Government Committee

HB 1539

Brief Description: Concerning the annexation of unincorporated territory within a code city.

Sponsors: Representatives Rodne, Springer, Hargrove, Sullivan, Magendanz, Takko, Kochmar, Pettigrew, Fitzgibbon and Ryu.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Increases the maximum amount of territory that can be annexed by a code city through legislative action under a specific annexation method from 100 acres to 175 acres.
- Removes certain restrictions on a code city's authority to annex unincorporated 'islands' of territory.

Hearing Date: 2/19/13

Staff: Ethan Moreno (786-7386).

Background:

Current law authorizes multiple methods for municipal annexations. While code and non-code cities and towns have separate statutory requirements for governance and operation, the annexation methods employed are generally similar.

Among other permitted annexation methods, code cities are authorized to conduct certain annexations through a resolution of the city's legislative body. Neither voter nor property owner approvals are necessary for these annexations. An example of this 'resolution only' authority, is the island annexation method which allows a code city to annex a qualifying unincorporated 'island' of territory containing residential property owners if the area:

- contains fewer than 100 acres, with at least 80 percent of the boundaries of the area contiguous to the city; or

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- is of any size, with at least 80 percent of the boundaries of the area contiguous to the city if the city existed before June 30, 1994. Annexations conducted through this provision must be for areas that are within the same county and urban growth area, and city must have been planning under the Growth Management Act as of June 30, 1994.

An annexation resolution for a qualifying unincorporated "island" of territory must describe the boundaries of the area to be annexed, state the number of voters within the subject area, and set a date for a public hearing on the annexation resolution. Specific public notice requirements must also be met, and annexations conducted through this method are subject to referendum.

Summary of Bill:

Provisions governing annexations of unincorporated "island" of territory by code cities are modified. A qualifying area for the "island" annexation method must comply with one of the following two sets of criteria:

- the area must contain fewer than 175 acres, rather than 100 acres, with at least 80 percent of the boundaries of the area contiguous to the city; or
- the area may be of any size, with at least 80 percent of the boundaries of the area contiguous to the city. Annexations conducted through this provision must be for areas that are within the same county and urban growth area. A requirement that the annexing city must have been planning under the Growth Management Act as of June 30, 1994, is deleted.

A general requirement specifying that the "island" annexation method may be used by code cities only for areas with residential property owners is deleted.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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