

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5410

As of April 4, 2013

Title: An act relating to metropolitan park district property tax levies.

Brief Description: Concerning metropolitan park district property tax levies.

Sponsors: Senator Schlicher.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Governmental Operations: 2/11/13.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS

Staff: Sam Thompson (786-7413)

Background: The Washington Constitution limits regular property tax levies to a maximum of 1 percent of the value of property. Statutory law sets limits on maximum levies imposed by the state, counties, cities, and special purpose districts to keep the aggregate levy within the constitutional limit, or \$10 per \$1,000 of assessed value. An additional limit prohibits the aggregate of some levies, including those imposed by certain special purpose districts, from exceeding \$5.90 per \$1,000 of assessed value. Statutes specify the preferential order in which levies subject to this limit must be prorated down if the \$5.90 limit is exceeded.

A metropolitan park district (MPD) is a type of special purpose district that may be created to acquire and manage parks, parkways, boulevards, and recreational facilities. An MPD may levy up to \$0.75 per \$1,000 of assessed value for its operations. Subject to majority voter approval, an MPD with a population of 150,000 or more, or an MPD in a county with a population of more than 1.5 million, may move part of its levy outside the \$5.90 aggregate limit for up to six years, thus preventing that part of the levy from being reduced through prorationing, so long as as the constitutional 1 percent limit is not exceeded.

Summary of Bill: Any MPD may, subject to majority voter approval, move part of its levy outside the \$5.90 aggregate limit for up to six years, thus preventing that part of the levy from being reduced through prorationing, so long as as the constitutional 1 percent limit is not exceeded.

This authorization applies to taxes levied for collection in 2014 and thereafter.

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.

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: This bill allows local park districts to go to the voters to see about moving part of the levy outside the tax limit for six years. Park districts rely almost exclusively on property taxes for their funding. This bill protects metropolitan parks, giving those taxing districts containing these parks increased funds to better maintain the parks' upkeep which is critical to their existence. Park districts would like the opportunity ask the voters if they feel it is important to fund the parks program. It is important that the general public have a means of funding to manage and improve the parks.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Terry Lee, Peninsula Metropolitan Park District; Bill Trandum, Key Peninsula Metropolitan Park District Commissioner; Mark Michelle, Scott Gallacher, Key Pen Parks; Carolyn Wiley, citizen.