
Local Government Committee

SB 5182

Brief Description: Granting fire protection districts and regional fire protection service authorities biennial budget authority.

Sponsors: Senators Dammeier and Liias.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Authorizes fire protection districts and regional fire protection authorities to adopt biennial budgets with mid-biennium reviews and modifications for the second year of the biennium.

Hearing Date: 3/12/15

Staff: Ethan Moreno (786-7386).

Background:

Fire Protection Districts.

Fire protection districts (fire districts) are created to provide fire and emergency services to protect life and property in locations outside of cities and towns. A fire district may be established through a process involving a petition by the residents of a proposed district, a public hearing, and voter approval. Fire districts are governed by a board of three or five elected commissioners, and are authorized to impose property taxes, benefit charges, or both.

Each year, fire districts are obligated to prepare and certify district budgets, and to deliver the budgets to the applicable county legislative authority or authorities in ample time for the levying of fire district taxes.

Regional Fire Protection Service Authorities.

In 2004 the Legislature authorized the creation of regional fire protection service authorities (RFAs) as separate taxing districts charged with providing regional fire protection and emergency services within their jurisdictional boundaries. An RFA is formed when elected

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officials from two or more adjacent fire protection jurisdictions develop a plan for the creation, financing, and operation of an RFA that is subsequently approved by voters within the proposed RFA. The governing body of an RFA is determined by provisions in the plan calling for its creation. An RFA may impose property taxes, benefit charges, or both.

Provisions governing RFAs do not include mandates or authorizations related to the frequency with which budgets must or may be adopted.

Summary of Bill:

In lieu of adopting an annual budget, fire districts may adopt biennial budgets with mid-biennium reviews and modifications for the second year of the biennium.

Provisions governing RFAs are modified to permit the adoption of biennial budgets with mid-biennium reviews and modifications for the second year of the biennium.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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