

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 1313

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Government Operations & Security, March 24, 2015

Title: An act relating to granting fire protection districts and regional fire protection service authorities biennial budget authority.

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

Sponsors: House Committee on Local Government (originally sponsored by Representatives Zeiger, Fey, Stambaugh, Takko, Van De Wege, Stokesbary, Griffey and Reykdal).

Brief History: Passed House: 3/02/15, 97-0.

Committee Activity: Government Operations & Security: 3/16/15, 3/24/15 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & SECURITY

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Roach, Chair; Pearson, Vice Chair; Liias, Ranking Minority Member; Dansel, Habib and McCoy.

Staff: Samuel Brown (786-7470)

Background: Fire Protection Districts. Fire protection districts (districts) are created to provide fire prevention, fire suppression, and emergency services within a district's boundaries. A district may be established through voter approval. A district is governed by a board of commissioners (board) composed of three, five, or seven members who are registered voters residing in the district. The board must hold regular monthly meetings and may call special meetings at any time under the Open Public Meetings Act. A district may be financed by imposing regular property taxes, excess voter-approved property tax levies, and benefit charges. A district has the powers and authorities of a municipal corporation, including taxation, eminent domain, and the authority to enter into contracts. The secretary of the district must prepare and deliver an annual budget to the legislative authority in the county or counties in which the district is located so that tax levies can be made for district purposes.

Regional Fire Protection Service Authority. A Regional Fire Protection Service Authority (Authority) may be created for the purpose of conducting specified fire protection functions

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at a regional level. An Authority may be created by the merger of two or more adjacent fire protection jurisdictions including fire protection districts, cities, port districts, and Indian tribes. An Authority may also be created by a vote of the people that approves an Authority plan (plan), and the creation of the Authority, as a single ballot measure. An Authority may impose property taxes, benefit charges, or both. An Authority is governed by a board charged with executing the plan. Board membership is determined by the plan and is limited to elected officials. The board is empowered to levy and impose taxes as authorized; enter into intergovernmental agreements; acquire, hold, or dispose of real property; exercise the powers of eminent domain; and exercise other powers and duties as are reasonably necessary to carry out its purposes.

Summary of Bill: A District or Authority may adopt a biennial budget in lieu of an annual budget with a mid-biennium review and modification for the second year of the biennial budget.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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: Biennial budgeting works for the Legislature and other government entities. Some efficiencies and savings should be seen. This will allow commissioners to consider long-term implications and allows more thorough oversight of the budget during the second year of the cycle. The public will still have the opportunity to weigh in on the budgeting process.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Representative Zeiger, prime sponsor; Keith Wright, Central Pierce Fire and Rescue.

Persons Signed in to Testify But Not Testifying: No one.