

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 1919

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Government Operations & Security, March 31, 2015

Title: An act relating to the timing of special elections.

Brief Description: Clarifying the timing of special elections.

Sponsors: House Committee on State Government (originally sponsored by Representative S. Hunt).

Brief History: Passed House: 3/11/15, 89-9.

Committee Activity: Government Operations & Security: 3/26/15, 3/31/15 [DP, DNP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & SECURITY

Majority Report: Do pass.

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

Minority Report: Do not pass.

Signed by Senator Dansel.

Staff: Curt Gavigan (786-7437)

Background: General Elections. All general elections are held on the first Tuesday following the first Monday in November.

Special Elections. A county, city, town, or district may trigger a special election by presenting a resolution to the county auditor. The special election dates and resolution deadlines are as follows:

- For a special election on the second Tuesday in February, the resolution deadline is 46 days before the election;
- For a special election on the fourth Tuesday in April, the resolution deadline is 46 days before the election;
- For a special election on the date of the primary, the resolution deadline is the Friday immediately before the first day of regular candidate filing; and
- For a special election on the day of the general election, the resolution deadline is the day of the primary.

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.

Election Certification. The county canvassing board is charged with determining and certifying the official election returns. The amount of time allowed to certify the election depends on the election type. The certification period is 14 days for a primary or special election, and 21 days for a general election.

Summary of Bill: The deadline for presenting a special election resolution for a February or April special election is increased to 60 days before the special election date. Additionally, the certification period for a February or April special election is decreased to ten days after the election.

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: This bill improves the timing for administration requirements relating to spring special elections. It will move the February resolution deadline a bit farther away from the holidays, and address a current challenge relating to the close proximity of April special election certifications and filing week.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Representative Hunt, prime sponsor; Monty Cobb, WA Assn. of County Officials; Rene LeBeau, King County Elections; Mary Hall, Thurston County Auditor.

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