

SHB 1800 - H AMD 1035

By Representative Tharinger

1 Strike everything after the enacting clause and insert the
2 following:

3 "NEW SECTION. **Sec. 101.** The legislature finds that the people
4 should have the choice to change their electoral systems to provide
5 district-based or hybrid elections that will better represent the
6 community voters. The legislature further finds that political
7 subdivisions should be authorized to respond to the people's desire
8 to enact district-based or hybrid elections either by ordinance or by
9 voter initiative.

10 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 102.** The definitions in this section apply
11 throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires
12 otherwise.

13 (1) "At-large" means any of the following methods of electing
14 members of the governing body of a political subdivision:

15 (a) One in which the voters of the entire jurisdiction elect the
16 members to the governing body;

17 (b) One in which the candidates are required to reside within
18 given areas of the jurisdiction and the voters of the entire
19 jurisdiction elect the members to the governing body.

20 (2) "District-based elections" means a method of electing members
21 to the governing body of a political subdivision in which the
22 candidate must reside within an election district that is a divisible
23 part of the political subdivision and is elected only by voters
24 residing within that election district.

25 (3) "Hybrid election" means a method of electing members to the
26 governing body where some seats are district-based and others are at-
27 large.

28 (4) "Political subdivision" means any county, city, town, school
29 district, fire protection district, port district, or public utility
30 district, but does not include the state.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 201.** (1) A political subdivision that
2 conducts an election pursuant to state, county, or local law, may
3 change its electoral system to a district-based or hybrid election
4 system by ordinance or resolution of the governing body, or pursuant
5 to a voter initiative, as provided under section 301 of this act.

6 (2) If a political subdivision invokes its authority under this
7 section, or as provided under section 301 of this act, to implement a
8 district-based or hybrid election system, it must adopt a plan
9 pursuant to section 202 of this act.

10 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 202.** (1) Prior to the adoption of its
11 proposed plan, the political subdivision shall provide full and
12 reasonable public notice of its actions. The political subdivision
13 shall hold at least one public hearing on the proposed plan at least
14 one week before adoption. Notice and information shall be provided in
15 the same languages offered by the county auditor when printing voter
16 pamphlets.

17 (2) (a) If the plan is adopted during the period of time between
18 the first Tuesday after the first Monday of November and on or before
19 January 15th of the following year, the political subdivision shall
20 order new elections to occur at the next succeeding general election.

21 (b) If the plan is adopted during the period of time between
22 January 16th and on or before the first Monday of November, the next
23 election will occur as scheduled and organized under the current
24 electoral system, but the political subdivision shall order new
25 elections to occur pursuant to the remedy at the general election the
26 following calendar year.

27 (3) If a political subdivision implements a district-based or
28 hybrid election system, the plan shall be consistent with the
29 following criteria:

30 (a) Each district shall be as reasonably equal in population as
31 possible to each and every other such district comprising the
32 political subdivision.

33 (b) Each district shall be reasonably compact.

34 (c) Each district shall consist of geographically contiguous
35 area.

36 (d) To the extent feasible, the district boundaries shall
37 coincide with existing recognized natural boundaries.

38 (e) District boundaries may not be drawn or maintained in a
39 manner that favors or disfavors any racial group or political party.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 203.** A new section is added to chapter
2 28A.343 RCW to read as follows:

3 The school board of directors may authorize a change to its
4 electoral system pursuant to section 201 of this act or by voter
5 initiative under section 301 of this act. Any staggering of
6 directors' terms shall be accomplished as provided in RCW 28A.343.030
7 and 28A.343.600 through 28A.343.650.

8 **Sec. 204.** RCW 36.32.020 and 1982 c 226 s 4 are each amended to
9 read as follows:

10 The board of county commissioners of each county shall divide
11 their county into three commissioner districts so that each district
12 shall comprise as nearly as possible one-third of the population of
13 the county: PROVIDED, That the territory comprised in any voting
14 precincts of such districts shall remain compact, and shall not be
15 divided by the lines of said districts.

16 However, the commissioners of any county composed entirely of
17 islands and with a population of less than thirty-five thousand may
18 divide their county into three commissioner districts without regard
19 to population, except that if any single island is included in more
20 than one district, the districts on such island shall comprise, as
21 nearly as possible, equal populations.

22 The commissioners of any county may authorize a change to their
23 electoral system pursuant to section 201 of this act or by voter
24 initiative under section 301 of this act. Except where necessary to
25 comply with a change authorized by voter initiative under section 301
26 of this act, the lines of the districts shall not be changed
27 (~~often~~) more often than once in four years and only when a full
28 board of commissioners is present. The districts shall be designated
29 as districts numbered one, two and three.

30 **Sec. 205.** RCW 36.32.040 and 1982 c 226 s 5 are each amended to
31 read as follows:

32 (1) Except as provided in subsection (2) of this section, the
33 qualified electors of each county commissioner district, and they
34 only, shall nominate from among their own number, candidates for the
35 office of county commissioner of such commissioner district to be
36 voted for at the following general election. Such candidates shall be
37 nominated in the same manner as candidates for other county and
38 district offices are nominated in all other respects.

1 (2) Where the commissioners of a county composed entirely of
2 islands with a population of less than thirty-five thousand have
3 chosen to divide the county into unequal-sized commissioner districts
4 pursuant to the exception provided in RCW 36.32.020, the qualified
5 electors of the entire county shall nominate from among their own
6 number who reside within a commissioner district, candidates for the
7 office of county commissioner of such commissioner district to be
8 voted for at the following general election. Such candidates shall be
9 nominated in the same manner as candidates for other county offices
10 are nominated in all other respects.

11 (3) The commissioners of any county may authorize a change to
12 their electoral system pursuant to section 201 of this act or by
13 voter initiative under section 301 of this act.

14 NEW SECTION. Sec. 206. A new section is added to chapter 35.21
15 RCW to read as follows:

16 The legislative authority of a city or town may authorize a
17 change to its electoral system pursuant to section 201 of this act or
18 by voter initiative under section 301 of this act.

19 NEW SECTION. Sec. 207. A new section is added to chapter 35A.21
20 RCW to read as follows:

21 The legislative authority of a code city or town may authorize a
22 change to its electoral system pursuant to section 201 of this act or
23 by voter initiative under section 301 of this act.

24 NEW SECTION. Sec. 208. A new section is added to chapter 52.14
25 RCW to read as follows:

26 The board of fire commissioners of a fire protection district may
27 authorize a change to its electoral system pursuant to section 201 of
28 this act by majority vote or by voter initiative under section 301 of
29 this act.

30 NEW SECTION. Sec. 209. A new section is added to chapter 53.12
31 RCW to read as follows:

32 The port commission may authorize a change to its electoral
33 system pursuant to section 201 of this act or by voter initiative
34 under section 301 of this act.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 301.** (1) The voters of a political
2 subdivision may authorize the governing body of the subdivision to
3 create a district-based or hybrid election system, in accordance with
4 section 201 of this act. The authorization may be initiated by a
5 petition of registered voters of the subdivision filed with the
6 county auditor of the county where the subdivision is located. If the
7 petition is signed by at least eight percent of the votes cast within
8 the subdivision for the office of governor at the last regular
9 gubernatorial election, the initiative must be submitted to a vote of
10 the registered voters of the subdivision in the next special or
11 general election.

12 (2) Petitions must be submitted to the county auditor not less
13 than four months before the date of such election. The signatures
14 included on different petitions submitted within the same deadline
15 period must be added together in regards to meeting the required
16 number of signatures.

17 (3) If the initiative is approved by a majority of the voters
18 voting the election, then the subdivision must propose and adopt a
19 plan to create a district-based or hybrid election system, pursuant
20 to section 202 of this act.

21 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 302.** Sections 101 through 202 and 301 of this
22 act constitute a new chapter in Title 29A RCW."

23 Correct the title.

EFFECT: Strikes all provisions and replaces with authority for
political subdivision to create district-based or hybrid elections by
ordinance or by voter initiative.

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