

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1167

As Reported by House Committee On:
Local Government

Title: An act relating to fire commissioner compensation.

Brief Description: Concerning fire commissioner compensation.

Sponsors: Representatives Griffey and Springer.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Local Government: 1/19/17, 1/26/17 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Changes the date that the Office of Financial Management is required to adjust compensation amounts due to inflation for fire commissioners (slated for July 1, 2018) to beginning January 1, 2019.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 7 members: Representatives Appleton, Chair; McBride, Vice Chair; Taylor, Ranking Minority Member; Griffey, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Gregerson, Peterson and Pike.

Staff: Yvonne Walker (786-7841).

Background:

A fire protection district (district) is a type of special purpose district, typically located in an unincorporated area, with responsibility to provide fire prevention and suppression services and emergency medical response services. A district has the powers and authorities of a municipal corporation.

Districts are generally managed by a board composed of three to seven commissioners. The number of commissioners can vary depending upon the number of commissioner districts, the number of full-time paid personnel employed at the fire department, the annual budget of

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a district, and whether a majority of the voters in the district have approved an increase in board membership. Commissioners are elected at-large and serve staggered six-year terms.

State statute provides that commissioners receive \$104 per day for time spent in actual attendance at official meetings of the board or in performance of other services or duties on behalf of the district. Annual compensation may not exceed \$9,984.

The Office of Financial Management (OFM) is required to adjust the compensation amounts for inflation every five years, beginning July 1, 2008. In 2013 the OFM adjusted the amount to \$114 per day with an annual compensation limit of \$10,944. The adjustments are published in the Washington State Register, but are not reflected in statute. The next adjustment is slated to occur on July 1, 2018.

Summary of Bill:

The date that the OFM is required to adjust the dollar threshold for fire commissioners' compensation amounts due to inflation is changed. The compensation amounts must be adjusted by the OFM for inflation every five years, beginning January 1, 2019.

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.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) The fire chiefs and commissioners would like to have this bill for efficiency and budgeting purposes. In the old days, the junior taxing districts would get together occasionally to raise inflation for their commissioners' compensation. Later, they decided just to compensate for inflation every five years during the month of July. The problem is that the state is on a fiscal year that starts in July, but local jurisdictions are on a calendar year starting in January. This bill will help local jurisdictions to properly budget.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Griffey, prime sponsor; and Ryan Spiller, Washington Fire Commissioners Association.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.