

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SB 6305

As Reported by House Committee On:
Local Government

Title: An act relating to library districts.

Brief Description: Concerning library districts.

Sponsors: Senators Liias, Braun, Wagoner and Wilson, C.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Local Government: 2/21/20, 2/28/20 [DPA].

Brief Summary of Bill
(As Amended by Committee)

- Extends the maximum term of nonvoter approved general obligation bonds for a library district from six to 20 years.
- Allows a county legislative authority to submit a single ballot proposition for establishing a library capital facility area and authorizing financing of library capital facilities.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Majority Report: Do pass as amended. Signed by 6 members: Representatives Pollet, Chair; Duerr, Vice Chair; Griffey, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Appleton, Goehner and Senn.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 1 member: Representative Kraft, Ranking Minority Member.

Staff: Elizabeth Allison (786-7129).

Background:

Any county, city, town, or library district can establish and maintain a library, either by itself or in cooperation with one or more other governmental units. There are four categories of

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library districts: rural county library districts; intercounty rural library districts; rural partial-county library districts; and island library districts.

A rural, intercounty, or island library district may contract indebtedness and issue general obligation bonds. The maximum term of nonvoter approved general obligation bonds may not exceed six years.

The county legislative authority or authorities for the county or counties in which a proposed library capital facility area is to be established must submit separate ballot propositions to voters to: (1) authorize the establishment of the library capital facility area; and (2) authorize the library capital facility area to finance facilities by issuing general indebtedness and imposing taxes.

A library capital facility area is a quasi-municipal corporation, independent taxing authority, and a taxing district created by a county legislative authority of one or several counties.

Summary of Amended Bill:

The maximum term of nonvoter approved general obligation bonds for rural, intercounty, and island library districts is extended from six to 20 years.

County legislative authorities establishing a library capital facility area may propose establishment of the library capital facility area and authority to finance library capital facilities in a single ballot proposition, rather than separately. The ballot proposition must be approved by a supermajority vote.

Amended Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The amended bill makes the following changes:

- requires that a ballot proposition to establish a library capital facility area and authorize financing of library capital facilities be approved by a supermajority vote rather than a simple majority vote; and
- defines "supermajority" as the affirmative vote of a three-fifths majority of those voting on the proposition, and specifies that the total number of persons voting on the proposition must be at least 40 percent of the voters in the proposed library capital facility area who voted in the last preceding statewide general election.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Preliminary fiscal note available.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) Public libraries are very supportive of the bill. Reducing the ballot to establish and finance library capital facilities makes sense, is more transparent, and will make it much easier for libraries.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Abby Moore, Public Libraries of Washington; and Carolyn Logue, Washington Library Association.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.