
SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 1567

State of Washington

68th Legislature

2023 Regular Session

By House State Government & Tribal Relations (originally sponsored by Representatives Gregerson, Lekanoff, Jacobsen, Doglio, and Reed)

READ FIRST TIME 02/14/23.

1 AN ACT Relating to commissioning a study on conservation district
2 election costs under Title 29A RCW; creating a new section; and
3 providing an expiration date.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) Subject to the availability of amounts
6 appropriated for this specific purpose, the Washington state
7 institute for public policy shall conduct an examination of the costs
8 associated with conservation district elections under current law,
9 and the projected costs and benefits for shifting conservation
10 district elections to be held on general election ballots under Title
11 29A RCW and making related changes as described below.

12 (2) The examination under this section must specifically include,
13 to the extent that the data allow:

14 (a) An analysis of the amount of money that each conservation
15 district spends on holding elections for supervisors under current
16 law, and a description of the funding sources that each conservation
17 district utilizes to fund its elections;

18 (b) Information about voter turnout in each conservation district
19 supervisor election in at least the past 6 years and up to the past
20 20 years, if the conservation district has such data, as well as a

1 calculation of the total cost per ballot cast that each conservation
2 district spent in those elections;

3 (c) A projection of the costs that would be expected to be
4 incurred by each county and each conservation district for its
5 supervisor elections if the district were to hold its supervisor
6 elections on general election ballots under the processes and
7 procedures in Title 29A RCW, including:

8 (i) Switching all supervisor positions to elected positions; and
9 (ii) Changing term lengths to four years, with terms staggered
10 such that elections are held every two years, to align with the
11 elections for other local government officials;

12 (d) A projection of the costs that would be expected to be
13 incurred by each county and each conservation district for its
14 supervisor elections if, in addition to the changes described in (c)
15 of this subsection, the conservation districts were divided into
16 zones such that each zone is represented by a single supervisor,
17 rather than electing each supervisor at-large throughout the
18 district; and

19 (e) An overall description of potential nonmonetary costs and
20 benefits associated with switching conservation district supervisor
21 elections to the general election ballots under Title 29A RCW and
22 incorporating the changes described in (c) and (d) of this
23 subsection.

24 (3) The Washington state institute for public policy must provide
25 as much information as possible in a preliminary report to the
26 legislature by December 1, 2023. A final report must be completed by
27 June 30, 2024, and submitted in accordance with RCW 43.01.036 to the
28 standing committees of the house of representatives and the senate
29 with jurisdiction over elections and conservation district issues.

30 (4) This section expires June 30, 2025.

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