

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5065

As of March 4, 2009

Title: An act relating to election of prosecuting attorneys.

Brief Description: Providing for nonpartisan election of prosecuting attorneys.

Sponsors: Senator Kline.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Government Operations & Elections: 2/05/09, 2/12/09 [DPF].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & ELECTIONS

Staff: Aaron Gutierrez (786-7448)

Background: "Partisan office" means a public office for which a candidate may indicate a political party preference.

The following elective offices are partisan:

- United States Senate;
- United States House of Representatives;
- state legislative offices; and
- county offices.

The following elective offices are non-partisan:

- the Superintendent of Public Instruction;
- state judicial offices; and
- county judicial offices, as well as any county offices declared non-partisan by home-rule charter.

Summary of Bill: The office of county prosecuting attorney is non-partisan. No person may hold both a nonpartisan and partisan elective office at the same time.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: Justice does not have a partisan preference. The nature of the justice system will always leave one party disappointed, and having a partisan preference presents a reason to assign blame. Not having a partisan preference will help gain the public's trust. The King County executive only has one partisan position: the county prosecuting attorney.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Janice Ellis, Snohomish County Prosecuting Attorney; Rea Culwell, Columbia County Prosecuting Attorney; Dan Satterberg, King County Prosecuting Attorney.