

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2697

As Passed House:
February 13, 2012

Title: An act relating to membership on city disability boards.

Brief Description: Addressing membership on city disability boards.

Sponsors: Representatives Ormsby and Bailey.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Ways & Means: 2/1/12, 2/6/12 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 2/13/12, 97-0.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Authorizes the election of a second employee representative to a Law Enforcement Officers' and Fire Fighters' Retirement System Plan 1 city disability board by law enforcement officers eligible to vote if there are no firefighters under the jurisdiction of the board eligible to vote.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 27 members: Representatives Hunter, Chair; Darneille, Vice Chair; Hasegawa, Vice Chair; Alexander, Ranking Minority Member; Bailey, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Dammeier, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Orcutt, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Carlyle, Chandler, Cody, Dickerson, Haigh, Haler, Hinkle, Hudgins, Hunt, Kagi, Kenney, Ormsby, Parker, Pettigrew, Ross, Schmick, Seaquist, Springer, Sullivan and Wilcox.

Staff: David Pringle (786-7310).

Background:

The Law Enforcement Officers' and Fire Fighters' Retirement System Plan 1 (LEOFF 1) provides retirement and disability benefits to law enforcement officers and fire fighters who

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entered eligible employment between 1969 and 1977. Since 1977 eligible law enforcement officers and fire fighters have entered LEOFF 2.

Decisions on eligibility for LEOFF 1 disability and medical benefits are made by city and county LEOFF 1 disability boards. Disability benefits may be granted by LEOFF 1 disability boards to members in LEOFF 1 for both duty and non-duty related causes. In addition to disability benefits, LEOFF 1 is unique among state retirement system benefits in that retiree benefits include coverage for all necessary medical services.

Each city with a population of 20,000 or more has a LEOFF 1 disability board and each county also has a disability board, and these county boards have jurisdiction over LEOFF 1 members who are not employed in a city that has its own disability board. The LEOFF 1 disability boards have five members. Under current law, one of the members of a county board must be a member of the legislative body of a city or town in the county that does not have its own board. This member must be chosen by a majority of the mayors of the affected cities or towns. The LEOFF 1 disability boards also have one member of the public appointed by the other members of the disability board, one active or retired fire fighter member representing fire fighters, and one active or retired law enforcement officer representing law enforcement officers.

Elections are held for fire fighter and law enforcement officer-designated LEOFF 1 disability board positions. Only members of LEOFF 1 who are subject to the jurisdiction of a board are entitled to vote for board members, though LEOFF 2 members may serve on the board. In the event that there are no eligible law enforcement officers or no fire fighters to vote in a LEOFF 1 county disability board election, the active and retired LEOFF 1 members may vote for a second law enforcement officer or fire fighter representative.

Summary of Bill:

In an election for a LEOFF 1 city disability board, if there are no firefighters under the jurisdiction of the board eligible to vote, a second eligible employee representative shall be elected by the law enforcement officers eligible to vote.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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) When a city reaches a population of 20,000 people, a new city disability board must be formed to make disability and medical benefit decisions for LEOFF Plan 1 members and retirees. In Federal Way, a disability board recently had to be formed, but the fire fighters work for the fire district rather than the city, therefore cannot vote. This bill is just trying to keep elected employee representatives on the boards.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Richard Warbrouck, Retired Firefighters of Washington.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.