

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5582

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
State Government & Elections, January 21, 2022

Title: An act relating to the deadline for a port commission to send new district boundaries to the county auditor when expanding from three commissioners to five.

Brief Description: Concerning the deadline for a port commission to send new district boundaries to the county auditor when expanding from three commissioners to five.

Sponsors: Senators Hunt and Kuderer.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: State Government & Elections: 1/19/22, 1/21/22 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires that port districts expanding from three to five commissioner districts divide into new commissioner districts by January 1st of the year in which the two new commissioners will be elected.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT & ELECTIONS

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Hunt, Chair; Kuderer, Vice Chair; Wilson, J., Ranking Member; Hasegawa and Hawkins.

Staff: Samuel Brown (786-7470)

Background: Port Districts. Port districts are established in various counties of the state to acquire, construct, maintain, operate, develop, and regulate harbor improvements; rail, motor vehicle, water, and air transfer and terminal facilities; other commercial transportation, transfer, handling, storage and terminal facilities; and industrial improvements.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Port district powers are exercised through a port commission. With some exceptions, port districts are divided into commissioner districts, and candidates for each district must reside in that district. Voters from each district nominate candidates, who then run in the general election.

Port Commission Expansion. Port commissions are set at three members, but can be increased to five by voter initiative or resolution of the port commission. If the port commission expands its membership to five members, two of the commissioner districts may include the entire port district.

If the resolution of a ballot measure expanding the port commission's membership creates five commissioner districts, two provisions of law provide deadlines for the creation of new districts. One provision requires the district boundaries to be submitted to the county auditor within 120 days of voter approval of commission expansion. Another provision requires that the new district boundaries be drawn by June 1st of the year in which the new commissioner positions will be elected.

Summary of Bill: Port districts which are increasing from three commissioners to five commissioners must divide into new commissioner districts by January 1st of the year in which the new commissioners will be elected.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: Thurston County is considering expanding its county commission and port commission from three commissioners to five. This is a cleanup bill that will give auditors time to re-draw precincts, ensuring voters are put in the correct districts when port commissions re-district. There needs to be some time to make sure everything happens the right way.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Sam Hunt, Prime Sponsor; Mary Hall, Thurston County Auditor's Office.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.