

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1039

As Reported By House Committee On: Government Operations

Title: An act relating to altering the Washington citizens' commission on salaries for elected officials by increasing the number of commission members selected by lot from registered voters, providing attendance requirements, and clarifying procedures.

Brief Description: Increasing the number of citizen members of the Washington citizens' commission on salaries for elected officials.

Sponsors: Representatives B. Thomas, Reams, Dyer, R. Fisher, Sommers, Costa, Mitchell, Basich and Wolfe.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Government Operations: 1/20/95, 1/24/95 [DP].

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 15 members: Representatives Reams, Chair; Goldsmith, Vice Chair; B. Thomas, Vice Chair; Rust, Ranking Minority Member; Scott, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Chopp; R. Fisher; Hargrove; Honeyford; Hymes; Mulliken; D. Schmidt; Sommers; Van Luven and Wolfe.

Staff: Bill Lynch (786-7092).

Background: The Washington Citizens' Commission on Salaries for Elected Officials is charged with the responsibility of fixing the salaries of members of the Legislature, all elected officials of the executive branch of state government, and all judges of the Supreme Court, courts of appeals, superior courts, and district courts after studying the relationship of the officials' salaries to their duties.

The commission currently consists of 15 members. Eight of these members are selected by lot by the Secretary of State from the lists of eligible registered voters. The seven remaining members of the commission must have experience in personnel management and are selected jointly by the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President of the Senate.

Each of the eight members who are selected from the lists of eligible voters must represent a different congressional district. There are now nine congressional districts in Washington State.

Repeated unexcused absences from commission meetings by a member does not result in that member's seat being declared vacant. There is no statutory procedure to grant a member an excused absence from a commission meeting.

Summary of Bill: The number of members on the Washington Citizens' Commission on Salaries for Elected Officials is increased from 15 to 16. The additional member is added because there must be a citizen member from each congressional district, and the number of congressional districts in Washington State recently increased from eight to nine districts.

The unexcused absence of a commission member from two consecutive commission meetings constitutes a relinquishment of that person's membership on the commission and creates a vacancy in that position. A procedure is created for a commission member to obtain an excused absence.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not Requested.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

Testimony For: The law needs amending to reflect the new number of congressional districts in the state. A member who repeatedly misses meetings should have his or her position declared vacant.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Representative Brian Thomas, prime sponsor; Ralph Munro, Secretary of State; and Leonard Nord, Chair, Washington Citizens Commission on Salaries.