

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## SSB 5795

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**As Reported By House Committee On:**  
Government Operations

**Title:** An act relating to reduction of city limits.

**Brief Description:** Authorizing an alternate method for reducing city limits for cities with over fifty thousand population.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Government Operations (originally sponsored by Senator Heavey).

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Government Operations: 3/29/95 [DP].

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

**Majority Report:** Do pass. Signed by 10 members: Representatives Reams, Chairman; Goldsmith, Vice Chairman; L. Thomas, Vice Chairman; Scott, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Hargrove; Honeyford; Hymes; Mulliken; D. Schmidt and Van Luven.

**Minority Report:** Do not pass. Signed by 5 members: Representatives Rust, Ranking Minority Member; Chopp; R. Fisher; Sommers and Wolfe.

**Staff:** Steve Lundin (786-7127).

**Background:**

Procedure to withdraw territory from a city or town.

The procedure to withdraw territory from a city or town is initiated by either the: (1) Filing of a petition proposing the withdrawal that has been signed by qualified voters of the entire city or town equal in number to at least 10 percent of the number of voters voting in the entire city or town at the last general municipal election; or (2) city or town legislative body adopting a resolution proposing the withdrawal.

A ballot proposition authorizing the withdrawal is submitted to voters of the entire city or town for their approval or rejection and the area is withdrawn if the

proposition is approved by at least a three-fifths majority vote of the voters voting on the proposition.

However, if a boundary review board exists in the county in which the city or town is located, the proposed withdrawal of territory is subject to potential review and approval, rejection, or modification and approval by a boundary review board. Boundary review board rejection of a proposed boundary change, including the proposed withdrawal or territory from a city, is final and a ballot proposition authorizing the withdrawal is not submitted to voters for their approval or rejection.

**Summary of Bill:** A new procedure is established to withdraw territory from cities with a population of 400,000 or more.

Under this new procedure, a petition proposing the withdrawal need only be signed by at least 25 percent of the qualified voters residing in the area proposed to be withdrawn if the area contains at least 10 percent of the total population of the city. In such an instance, only the voters residing in the area proposed to be withdrawn vote on the proposition.

The proposed withdrawal of territory using this new procedure is not subject to potential review by a boundary review board.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

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

**Testimony For:** This is an equity issue. People in West Seattle have differing viewpoints than people in the rest of Seattle. We do not have adequate representation. People probably wouldn't vote to withdraw anyway. This sends a message.

**Testimony Against:** Don't interfere with local affairs. I like being part of Seattle. This is unfair and will allow political blackmail. This adversely affects bond ratings in Seattle and elsewhere. Why isolate Seattle and not other cities?

**Testified:** Senator Heavey, prime sponsor; Representative Poulsen; Alexandra Pye, Alki Community; Jay Saucedo, United We Stand; Vivian McLean, citizen; Peggy Tlapak, citizen; Maureen Morris, Association of Washington Cities; Julie Brown, Neighborhood Rights; Dona Rousseau, citizen; Al Rousseau, Admiral Community Council; Arlo Bonney and Charlie Chong, Neighborhood Rights; Jane Noland, city of Seattle; and Tommy Grieve, citizen.