

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1094

As Reported By House Committee On:

Government Administration

Title: An act relating to election costs.

Brief Description: Extending state payment of election costs.

Sponsors: Representatives D. Schmidt, Costa, D. Sommers and Anderson.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Government Administration: 1/21/97, 1/22/97 [DPS].

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 13 members: Representatives D. Schmidt, Chairman; D. Sommers, Vice Chairman; Scott, Ranking Minority Member; Gardner, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Doumit; Dunn; Dunshee; Murray; Reams; Smith; L. Thomas; Wensman and Wolfe.

Staff: Bronwyn Mauldin (786-7093).

Background: Officers and measures from different levels of government are often voted on at the same primary or general elections. The state pays a prorated share of the cost of the election in odd-numbered years when state officers or measures are voted on. Each county auditor determines the state's share of the election costs, and files an expense claim with the secretary of state. The county assumes the state's cost during even-numbered years.

Summary of Substitute Bill: The state pays a prorated share of the costs of any state primary or general election in even-numbered years when state officers or measures are voted on. This will be phased in over six years, with the state paying 25 percent in 1998, and paying 100 percent in 2004 and thereafter.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The substitute bill clarifies that the state pays only a prorated share when reimbursing counties for even-year election costs.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 17, 1997.

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

Testimony For: This is an unfunded mandate from the state to the counties in even-numbered years. With other expenses such as law and justice increasing dramatically, counties need the state to help them pay for election costs. The cost to counties of holding elections is increasing.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Bob Terwilliger, Snohomish County Auditor; Doug Cochran, Yakima County Auditor; Bettie Ingham, Washington State Association of Counties; and Ralph Munroe, Secretary of State.