

FINAL BILL REPORT

SSB 6285

C 16 L 98

Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Revising provisions relating to imposition of benefit charges by fire protection districts.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Government Operations (originally sponsored by Senators Goings, McCaslin, Haugen, Winsley, Patterson and Rasmussen).

Senate Committee on Government Operations
House Committee on Government Administration

Background: The board of commissioners of a fire protection district may impose a benefit charge for up to six years on personal property and improvements to real property if the benefit charge is approved by 60 percent majority of the voters of the district voting at a general election or a special election. If the benefit charge is imposed, a fire protection district is prohibited from imposing a third property tax levy not exceeding 50 cents per thousand dollars of assessed value. The benefit charge may not exceed 60 percent of the district's operating budget.

A benefit charge must be reasonably proportioned to the measurable benefits to property resulting from the services afforded by the district.

Even if a ballot proposition is for reauthorization of a benefit charge, the ballot proposition must read (in part) . . . be authorized to impose benefit charges . . .-

Summary: It is clarified that the benefit charge on any single property may be compiled into a single charge, but the fire protection district must provide an itemized list of charges for each measurable benefit upon request of the property owner.

Fire protection districts renewing the benefit charge may use an alternative ballot proposition which reads (in part) . . . be authorized to 'continue voter-authorized' benefit charges . . .-

A fire protection district that discontinues the use of a benefit charge is allowed to set its third 50 cent levy at the amount which would have been allowed under the 106 percent limitation if the levy, rather than the benefit charge, had been imposed.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	48 0
House	95 0

Effective: June 11, 1998