

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6412

As of January 23, 1998

Title: An act relating to voting for port commissioners.

Brief Description: Limiting voters of a port commissioner district to elect commissioners in districts with populations of five hundred thousand or more.

Sponsors: Senators McCaslin, Patterson, Heavey, Roach, Haugen and Schow.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Government Operations: 1/27/98.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

Staff: Diane Smith (786-7410)

Background: Port districts are authorized to acquire, build, maintain, operate, develop and regulate the commercial transportation, transfer, storage, handling, and terminal facilities and industrial improvements within the district. They are formed by a vote of the voters in the county. They may encompass the whole county or only part of the county. The powers of the port district are exercised by either three or five elected port commissioners. Port districts must be divided into commissioner districts when the district is not coextensive with the county boundaries and the county has a population of 500,000 or more; and when the district is coextensive with the county boundary and the county has a population less than 500,000, there are three port commissioners and three county legislative authority districts. In the latter case, the port commissioner districts are the county legislative authority districts.

Commissioner districts are used as a residency requirement to determine the eligibility of candidates for port commissioner and to limit the voters who may vote for candidates in the primary to only those voters of the commissioner district. In the general election, all voters of the district may vote for commissioners from all districts which is termed an election at large.—

Summary of Substitute Bill: Every port district with a population of one million or more is divided into five commissioner districts and has five commissioners. The commissioners are nominated and elected by district. The currently elected commissioners serve out their terms unaffected by the bill, except that they represent their respective commissioner districts, not the port district as a whole. The port commissioners may submit to the voters of the port district the option to return to election of the commissioners at large.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The original bill was not considered.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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