

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## SSB 5319

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**As Reported by House Committee On:**  
Local Government & Housing

**Title:** An act relating to the municipal research council.

**Brief Description:** Changing provisions relating to the municipal research council.

**Sponsors:** By Senate Committee on State & Local Government (originally sponsored by Senators Haugen, Horn and Gardner).

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Local Government & Housing: 3/22/01, 3/29/01 [DPA].

**Brief Summary of Substitute Bill**  
**(As Amended by House Committee)**

- Reduces the number of members on the Municipal Research Council from 23 to 14.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT & HOUSING

**Majority Report:** Do pass as amended. Signed by 12 members: Representatives Dunshee, Democratic Co-Chair; Mulliken, Republican Co-Chair; Edwards, Democratic Vice Chair; Mielke, Republican Vice Chair; Berkey, Crouse, DeBolt, Dunn, Edmonds, Hatfield, Jarrett and Kirby.

**Staff:** Caroleen Dineen (786-7156).

**Background:**

The Municipal Research Council (Council) is a state agency that contracts for the provision of municipal research and services to cities, towns, and counties. The Council is composed of 23 members serving two-year terms, including:

- four from the Senate, with equal representation from each of the two major political parties, who are appointed by the President of the Senate;
- four from the House of Representatives, with equal representation from each of the

two major political parties, who are appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives;

- one appointed by the Governor;
- nine city or town officials appointed by the Governor from a list of nine nominees submitted by the Association of Washington Cities; and
- five county officials appointed by the Governor, two from a list of two nominees submitted by the Washington Association of County Officials and three from a list of three nominees submitted by the Washington State Association of Counties.

For the city and town officials appointed to the Council, at least one must be an official from a city with a population: (1) of at least 20,000; (2) between 1,500 and 20,000; and (3) fewer than 1,500.

The Council may contract with state agencies, educational institutions, or private consulting firms qualified to provide research and services. Municipal research and services for city, town, and county governments include: (1) studying and researching these governments and their issues; (2) acquiring, preparing and distributing relevant publications; (3) providing relevant educational conferences; and (4) furnishing legal, technical, consultative, and field services related to planning, public health, utility services, fire protection, law enforcement, public works, and other relevant issues.

Requests for legal services by county officials must be sent by the Council to the office of the county prosecuting attorney. The Council's responses to county requests for legal services must be provided to the requesting official and the county prosecuting attorney.

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### **Summary of Amended Bill:**

The number of members on the Municipal Research Council (Council) is reduced from 23 to 14. The Council members include:

- two from the Senate, with equal representation from each of the two major political parties, who are appointed by the President of the Senate;
- two from the House of Representatives, with equal representation from each of the two major political parties, who are appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives;
- the director of the Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development; six city or town officials appointed by the Governor from a list of six nominees submitted by the Association of Washington Cities; and

- three county officials appointed by the Governor, one nominated by the Washington Association of County Officials and two from a list of two nominees submitted by the Washington State Association of Counties.

**Amended Bill Compared to Substitute Bill:**

The amendment reinstates the requirement for the Municipal Research Council to submit requests for legal services and responses to these requests to county prosecuting attorneys' offices.

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**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Effective Date of Amended Bill:** The bill contains an emergency clause and takes place on June 1, 2001.

**Testimony For:** Some county prosecutors want the Municipal Research Council to continue to be required to send copies of legal requests to county prosecutors because the county prosecutors' offices are obligated to defend the County's actions.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Testified:** (In support) Bill Cole, Municipal Research Council.

(In support with amendment) Tom McBride, Washington Association of Prosecuting Attorney's.