

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6330

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Natural Resources, Parks & Shorelines, January 28, 2002

Title: An act relating to metropolitan park districts.

Brief Description: Revising provisions relating to metropolitan park districts.

Sponsors: Senators Regala, Jacobsen, Poulsen, Oke and Swecker.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Natural Resources, Parks & Shorelines: 1/24/02, 1/28/02 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES, PARKS & SHORELINES

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Jacobsen, Chair; Poulsen, Vice Chair; Hargrove, McDonald, Morton, Oke, Snyder and Spanel.

Staff: Kari Guy (786-7437)

Background: Cities of 5,000 or more population may create a metropolitan park district for the management and acquisition of parks and boulevards. To create the district, the city must submit the proposition to the voters. The ballot proposition may be initiated by the city legislative authority or by petition of 15 percent of registered voters. At the same election determining creation of the district, five park commissioners are elected. One metropolitan park district, the Metropolitan Park District of Tacoma, currently exists in the state.

A metropolitan park district may impose two separate regular property tax levies on all property located in the district: (1) a levy not to exceed \$0.50 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation; and (2) a levy not to exceed \$0.25 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation. The metropolitan park district levies are subject to the constitutional 1 percent limitation on property taxes that applies to all taxing district levies.

The Legislative Task Force on Local Parks and Recreation recommended changes to establishment and operation of metropolitan park districts to encourage more local governments to form metropolitan park districts.

Summary of Bill: Any city or county, or combination of cities and counties, may create a metropolitan park district. The ballot proposition must be submitted to the voters of the area proposed for inclusion in the metropolitan park district after each county or city legislative authority enacts a resolution to create the district.

The metropolitan park board may be composed in any of the following alternatives:

- Five commissioners may be elected at the same election creating the district;

- For a district located entirely within one city or the unincorporated area of one county, the legislative authority of the city or county may act as the metropolitan park board; or
- For a district located in multiple cities or counties, each legislative authority may appoint one or more members to serve as the board.

The ballot proposition must clearly describe the composition of the board of commissioners of the district.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: This bill provides local communities with another choice for funding operation and maintenance of parks and recreation facilities. District formation is voter approved, and commissioners have some independence from the pressure of other government needs. Metropolitan park districts can encourage greater coordination of efforts and efficiency in service delivery between cities and counties.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: Arvilla Ohlde, City of Edmonds; Don Williams, WA Rec. and Park Assn.; Dave Veleg, Yakima County Parks; Brit Kramer, City of Lacey; Daryl Faber, City of Burien; Vern Veysey, Assn. Of Realtors; Mike Colbrese, WIAA; Michael Collins, REI; Shauna Larsen, City of Seattle; Rich Bemm, City of Longview; Debra Moonan Churchill, Redmond; Patrice Thorell, Des Moines; Bruce Fletcher, City of Tukwila; Mark Brown, City of Vancouver; Wes Petersen, City of Aberdeen; John Hodgson, City of Kent; Jane Boubel, City of Olympia; Larry Otos, City of Mount Vernon; Bob Vaux, Skagit County.