

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2181

As Reported by House Committee On:
State Government & Tribal Affairs

Title: An act relating to extending the age for service in the Washington state guard.

Brief Description: Extending the age for service in the Washington state guard.

Sponsors: Representatives Dammeier, Orwall, Bailey, Finn, McCune, Sullivan, Klippert, Hudgins, Hope, Hunt, Taylor, Jinkins, Ladenburg, Hansen, Ryu, Maxwell, Asay, Kelley, Kenney, Hurst and Shea.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

State Government & Tribal Affairs: 1/16/12 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Allows the Adjutant General to extend the age of service for members of the Washington State Guard.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT & TRIBAL AFFAIRS

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 11 members: Representatives Hunt, Chair; Appleton, Vice Chair; Taylor, Ranking Minority Member; Overstreet, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Alexander, Condotta, Darneille, Dunshee, Hurst, McCoy and Miloscia.

Staff: Marsha Reilly (786-7135).

Background:

The Washington State Guard (Guard) is a military organization available to serve the Governor in the event that the National Guard in the State of Washington is called into federal service. The Governor may also call the Guard into state service in other instances, for example, in the wake of a natural disaster.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

The period of enlistment in the Guard is set by regulation by the Adjutant General. However, no enlistment may be fulfilled unless the term of service can be completed before the applicant reaches age 64.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

The Adjutant General may extend the service age upon request by an active member of the Guard if the Adjutant General determines the member's extension would be in the best interest of the Guard. Extensions are for a one-year duration and may be renewed until the member attains age 68.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The substitute bill expands the ability to extend the age requirement to officers in the Guard and conditions the approval based on the Adjutant General's determination that the extension is in the best interest of the Guard. Extensions are for a one-year duration and may be renewed until the member reaches age 68. The language pertaining to conditioning the extension based on physical and mental requirements is removed.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date of Substitute Bill: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) The Guard is part of the organized militia of the state, but separate from the National Guard. The Guard is a "state defense force" authorized by federal law and first formed during World War I. The Guard is staffed by volunteers who dedicate time to help train the National Guard and to prepare for state emergencies. Current law requires Guard members to retire at age 64. It is not unreasonable to expect that members of the Guard are fit and able to serve beyond age 64. The bill provides the authority to grant extensions to those Guard members who are ready, willing, and able to continue to serve the citizens of this state. The National Guard Association supports the bill and believes that it will assist the Guard in the recruitment and retention of individuals who have the demonstrated knowledge and skill-sets necessary to support its missions in support of the National Guard and emergency management. Guard members are volunteers from a wide range of military and civilian backgrounds. The bill will facilitate and encourage the spirit of volunteerism and selfless service.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Dammeier, prime sponsor; Timothy Lowenberg, Washington State Military Department; and Terry Oxley, National Guard Association of Washington.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.