
SENATE BILL 6312

State of Washington 64th Legislature 2016 Regular Session

By Senators Keiser, Roach, and Hasegawa

Read first time 01/14/16. Referred to Committee on Government Operations & Security.

1 AN ACT Relating to the core legislative powers of elected
2 commissioners of a public hospital district; amending RCW 70.44.007;
3 adding new sections to chapter 70.44 RCW; and creating a new section.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature intends to clarify the
6 limits on public hospital districts to delegate the core legislative
7 powers of the district and its elected board of commissioners to
8 other entities. As a duly constituted public hospital district,
9 elected commissioners must maintain and exercise their authority to
10 carry out core legislative powers, including, but not limited to, the
11 power to approve or reject proposed tax levy measures, the incurring
12 of debt or bond issuance, the selection of the district's chief
13 executive, and the district's annual budget. The legislature further
14 intends that elected commissioners for a public hospital district may
15 not transfer their authority to a nonstatutory, unelected decision-
16 making body without the approval of the voters in that district.

17 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 70.44
18 RCW to read as follows:

19 A public hospital district may not delegate any of the core
20 legislative powers of its elected commissioners to another decision-

1 making body unless a proposition to ratify such an agreement is
2 submitted to the voters of the public hospital district at the next
3 general election. The text of the proposition to ratify the
4 agreement, an explanatory statement describing the measure, and
5 statements for and against the measure must be included in the local
6 voter's pamphlet as provided in RCW 29A.32.210 through 29A.32.280.
7 The election must be conducted as provided in Title 29A RCW. The
8 costs of the election must be paid by the public hospital district
9 and the entity to which the powers have been delegated. If the
10 agreement is not ratified by a majority of the votes cast on the
11 proposition, the agreement is terminated.

12 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 70.44
13 RCW to read as follows:

14 (1) For any public hospital district that has entered into an
15 agreement delegating any of the core legislative powers of its
16 elected commissioners to another decision-making body prior to the
17 effective date of this section, a majority vote of approval from the
18 district's elected commissioners is required for every decision
19 regarding: (a) A tax levy; (b) the district's annual budget; (c) the
20 incurring of debt or the issuance of bond; or (d) the selection of
21 the district's chief administrative official. If a majority of the
22 district's elected commissioners do not vote to approve the decision,
23 the decision in question must be submitted to the voters at the next
24 general election.

25 (2) The text of the proposition to ratify the decision, an
26 explanatory statement describing the measure, and statements for and
27 against the measure must be included in the local voter's pamphlet as
28 provided in RCW 29A.32.210 through 29A.32.280. The election must be
29 conducted as provided in Title 29A RCW. The costs of the election
30 must be paid by the public hospital district and the entity to which
31 the powers have been delegated. If the decision is not ratified by a
32 majority of the votes cast on the proposition, the decision is
33 revoked.

34 **Sec. 4.** RCW 70.44.007 and 1997 c 332 s 15 are each amended to
35 read as follows:

36 As used in this chapter, the following words have the meanings
37 indicated:

1 (1) "Core legislative powers" means those powers usually
2 associated with the legislative branch of government including, but
3 not limited to, the powers to tax, to establish a budget, to incur
4 debt, and to select or ratify the chief administrative official to
5 operate the public hospital district.

6 (2) "Other health care facilities" means nursing home, extended
7 care, long-term care, outpatient and rehabilitative facilities,
8 ambulances, and such other facilities as are appropriate to the
9 health needs of the population served.

10 (~~(2)~~) (3) "Other health care services" means nursing home,
11 extended care, long-term care, outpatient, rehabilitative, health
12 maintenance, and ambulance services and such other services as are
13 appropriate to the health needs of the population served.

14 (~~(3)~~) (4) "Public hospital district" or "district" means public
15 health care service district.

--- END ---