

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1927

*As Reported By House Committee on:
Local Government*

Title: An act relating to metropolitan municipal corporations.

Brief Description: Changing provisions relating to assumption of metropolitan municipal corporation functions by a county.

Sponsor(s): Representatives Nelson, Brough, Haugen and Holland.

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Local Government, March 6, 1991, DPS.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

Majority Report: *That Substitute House Bill No. 1927 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.*
Signed by 15 members: Representatives Haugen, Chair; Cooper, Vice Chair; Ferguson, Ranking Minority Member; Mitchell, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Bray; Edmondson; Franklin; Horn; Nealey; Nelson; Rayburn; Roland; Wood; Wynne; and Zellinsky.

Staff: Steve Lundin (786-7127).

Background: Metropolitan municipal corporations (metros) are authorized to be formed to provide a variety of public facilities and services. The metropolitan council of a metro is a federated body consisting of members of the county legislative authority of the county in which the metro is located, officials of cities within the metro, and other appointed officials.

Two metros have been created. The Metropolitan Municipal Corporation of Seattle performs public transit and sewage disposal within King County. SnoMet is authorized to perform regional planning throughout Snohomish County, but is inactive.

Legislation was enacted in 1977 allowing a class AA or A county in which a metro exists to assume the powers of the metro if a ballot proposition authorizing the assumption is

approved by the voters of both: (1) the central city; and (2) the remainder of the metro outside of the central city. This dual voter approval requirement is the same as to create a metro.

The Federal District Court in Seattle recently held that the scheme of representation on the metropolitan council of the Metropolitan Municipal Corporation of Seattle violates the "one person, one vote" doctrine that has been established by the United States Supreme Court under the Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendment to the United States Constitution. The judge has ruled that the scheme of representation on the metropolitan council must be remedied by April 3, 1992.

Summary of Substitute Bill: The statute allowing a class AA or A county to assume the powers of a metro located within its boundaries is amended to eliminate the voting requirement and to provide that on April 3, 1992, a county with a population of one million or more that is coterminous with a metro shall assume the rights, powers, functions, and obligations of the metro, if the county has a charter amendment providing a mechanism for cities to have a role in regional decisions in the county.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The automatic assumption of powers is limited to counties with the charter amendment providing for city participation.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: This is a vehicle for the potential resolution to the metro "one person, one vote" decision. The summit members are attempting to agree to a compromise proposal.

Testimony Against: None.

Witnesses: Chuck Mize, city of Bellevue.