

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6019

**AS REPORTED BY COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS,
FEBRUARY 4, 1994**

Brief Description: Revising compensation provisions for local government officials.

SPONSORS: Senators Haugen and Winsley

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Haugen, Chairman; Drew, Vice Chairman; Loveland, McCaslin, Oke, Owen and Winsley.

Staff: Eugene Green (786-7405)

Hearing Dates: January 27, 1994; February 4, 1994

BACKGROUND:

There are many conflicts and ambiguities in current statutes authorizing compensation for local government officials. SB 5050, as introduced in 1993, would have standardized these provisions. The situations in which confusion arises includes the following:

1. Reimbursement for travel expenses connected to official business. Where statutory authorization is provided, the code sections are not uniform. In a few instances (such as cities, sewer districts, metropolitan park districts and weed districts) no specific authorization exists.
2. Provision for insurance for members of a governing body of a local unit of government. In some jurisdictions, the members must pay premiums; in others, the premium is paid by the governmental unit. In still other cases, some local governments are not prohibited from paying more for insurance for the governing body than for their employees.
3. Establishing a specific salary level for city council members in newly incorporated noncode cities. (There is such a provision in code cities.)
4. The ability of member governing bodies in some jurisdictions to waive a portion of their compensation, to avoid the constitutional prohibition against receiving a compensation increase during a term of office.
5. Whether compensation must be set in the charter or in an ordinance in first-class cities.

SUMMARY:

Provisions for reimbursing members of local government legislative bodies for travel expenses are standardized. Members are entitled to reimbursement for reasonable expenses actually incurred in connection with official business, including subsistence and lodging while away from their residences. Members may also receive mileage for use of a privately-owned vehicle.

Cities, sewer districts, city planning commissions, city libraries, metropolitan park districts, weed districts, and intercounty weed districts are specifically authorized to reimburse their governing body members for travel expenses.

Units of local government are prohibited from providing greater insurance coverage to their governing body members than to their employees, except for liability insurance.

A specific salary schedule is adopted for city council members in newly incorporated noncode cities. The salaries listed in this schedule apply only until a salary ordinance can be enacted and take effect. The salaries are set as follows:

- Cities of 20,000 or more: \$400 per month;
- Cities of 10,000 to 20,000: \$150 per month
- Cities of 1,500 to 10,000: \$75 per month
- Cities of less than 1,500: \$20 per meeting, no more than two meetings per month;
- The mayor receives an additional 25 percent of a member's salary.

City council members and members of governing bodies in districts such as diking and drainage, flood control and irrigation districts may waive a portion or all of their compensation by filing a written waiver with the governing body.

The conflict in the first-class city statutes pertaining to compensation is eliminated by requiring that such compensation be fixed by ordinance.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: none requested

TESTIMONY FOR: None

TESTIMONY AGAINST: None

TESTIFIED: No one