

SENATE BILL REPORT

SJR 8219

As of January 25, 1996

Brief Description: Amending the Constitution to provide for a simple majority of voters voting at a state general election to authorize school district levies.

Sponsors: Senators Oke, Haugen, Wood and Rasmussen.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Education: 1/26/96.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Staff: Susan Mielke (786-7422)

Background: The Washington State Constitution gives school districts the authority to levy local property taxes, if the voters of the district approve the levy. Such approval requires at least 60 percent of those voting to vote "yes," and the voter turnout must be at least equal to 40 percent of the voter turnout at the previous general election. If the voter turnout is less than 40 percent of the previous general election turnout, the measure can still be approved if the number of those voting "yes" equals at least 60 percent of the number that represents 40 percent of the previous general election turnout.

Approval for a school district to issue bonds for capital purposes requires at least 60 percent of those voting to vote "yes," and the voter turnout must be at least equal to 40 percent of the voter turnout at the previous general election.

To amend the Washington Constitution, an amendment must be passed by two-thirds majority of both houses and approved by a majority of vote of the people.

Summary of Bill: An amendment to the Washington State Constitution is proposed. The 60 percent super-majority and the 40 percent voter turnout requirements are eliminated. A simple majority of voters voting approves school district levy and bond issues. School district levy and bond approval elections can only be held at general elections.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: Upon approval by a majority vote of the people at the general election in November.