

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2628

As Reported by House Committee On:
Local Government

Title: An act relating to the compensation of commissioners of certain metropolitan park districts.

Brief Description: Concerning the compensation of commissioners of certain metropolitan park districts.

Sponsors: Representatives Fey, Stambaugh and Jinkins.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Local Government: 1/23/18, 1/25/18 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Increases the per diem and annual compensation amounts for metropolitan park district (MPD) commissioners.
- Changes the date that the Office of Financial Management is required to adjust compensation amounts due to inflation for MPD commissioners to begin on January 1, 2018.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 4 members: Representatives Appleton, Chair; McBride, Vice Chair; Gregerson and Peterson.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 2 members: Representatives Pike, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Taylor.

Minority Report: Without recommendation. Signed by 1 member: Representative Griffey, Ranking Minority Member.

Staff: Yvonne Walker (786-7841).

Background:

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.

Metropolitan Park Districts.

In Washington, a special purpose district (SPD) is a limited purpose local government separate from a city, town, or county government. Special purpose districts provide an array of services and facilities that are otherwise not available from city or county governments. A metropolitan park district (MPD) is a type of special purpose district created for the control, management, improvement, maintenance, or acquisition of parks, parkways, boulevards, and recreational facilities. An MPD may include territory located in portions or in all of one or more cities or counties.

Metropolitan Park District Board.

Most powers of SPDs are vested in a board of district commissioners, board of district trustees, or board of district directors. The officers of an MPD include five elected park commissioners who serve up to six-year terms. The commissioners are elected simultaneously when voters are deciding whether an MPD should be formed.

Per diem compensation is available for select SPD positions for performance of services on behalf of the district, such as attendance at meetings or time spent devoted to the business of the district. A commissioner for two or more SPDs may only receive per diem compensation for one commissioner position if attending a meeting or conducting business while representing more than one of the commissioner's districts. Compensation may be collected from more than one district if approval has been granted by resolution of all boards of the affected commissions.

State statute provides that MPD commissioners receive \$90 per day for attendance at official meetings and for other official duties performed on behalf of the district. Annual compensation may not exceed \$8,640 per year.

The Office of Financial Management (OFM) is required to adjust the compensation amounts for inflation every five years, beginning July 1, 2008. In 2013 the OFM adjusted the amount to \$114 per day with an annual compensation limit of \$10,944. The adjustments are published in the Washington State Register, but are not reflected in statute. The next adjustment is slated to occur on July 1, 2018.

Consumer Price Index.

The consumer price index (CPI) is an index prepared and published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the United States Department of Labor which measures average changes in prices of goods and services. It is used to illustrate the extent that prices have risen or the amount of inflation that has taken place.

Summary of Bill:

State statute is amended to reflect the MPD commissioner compensation amounts published in the Washington State Register. The maximum per diem compensation for MPD commissioners is increased to \$114 and the annual compensation is increased to \$10,944 for duties performed on behalf of the MPD district. The maximum annual compensation amount

is set to \$22,000 for any MPD with facilities, including an aquarium, wildlife park, and a zoo, that are accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency.

The date that the OFM is required to adjust the dollar thresholds for MPD commissioners' compensation amounts due to inflation is changed. The compensation amounts must be adjusted by the OFM for inflation every five years, beginning July 1, 2018 (rather than 2008).

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: 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 MPD is a unique entity that has been around since the year 1907 and which offers a large variety of recreational attractions. Central Park is the largest municipal park in the country and Point Defiance Park is the second largest municipal park in the county.

The metropolitan park commissioners maintain a hefty workload for park districts. Currently, many of the commissioners are reaching their salary cap during the early part of the year and as a result, they are not being reimbursed for the time they put in to accomplish their duties. It makes sense to increase their pay.

This legislation is an internal housekeeping bill. This bill doubles the annual cap for commissioners from \$10,944 to \$22,000. The bill does not change the current daily rate of \$114 that commissioners get paid because the OFM has previously already increased the rate from \$90 to \$114. This bill just brings the statute up to date with the current rates.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Fey, prime sponsor; and Andrew Austin, Metro Parks Tacoma.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.