

SENATE BILL REPORT

2SHB 2004

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
State Government, Tribal Relations & Elections, February 21, 2018

Title: An act relating to the retirement age for state guard members.

Brief Description: Concerning the retirement age for state guard members.

Sponsors: House Committee on Community Development, Housing & Tribal Affairs (originally sponsored by Representative Klippert).

Brief History: Passed House: 2/07/18, 98-0.

Committee Activity: State Government, Tribal Relations & Elections: 2/16/18, 2/21/18 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Eliminates the age restriction for enlistment with the Washington State Guard (Guard).
- Expands the Adjutant General's ability to extend the service age of an active member of the Guard beyond age 64 under certain conditions.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT, TRIBAL RELATIONS & ELECTIONS

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Hunt, Chair; Kuderer, Vice Chair; Miloscia, Ranking Member; Saldaña and Zeiger.

Staff: Melissa Van Gorkom (786-7491)

Background: The Guard is a military unit organized by the Washington State Military Department. Members of the Guard are volunteers and serve under the direction of the state's adjutant general. Guard members are available to serve the Governor in place of the National Guard in the event that the National Guard in Washington is called into federal service. The Governor may also call the Guard into state service in other instances, including natural disasters, search and rescue, or recovery operations.

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.

The period of enlistment in the Guard is set by rules adopted by the adjutant general. However, the term of service must be completed before the applicant reaches age 64. The adjutant general may extend the service age upon request by an active member of the Guard if the adjutant general determines the member's extension would be in the best interest of the Guard. Extensions are for one-year and may be renewed until the member reaches age 68.

Summary of Bill: The age limit for enlistment to the Guard is eliminated.

The adjutant general has full discretion to decide the period of enlistment for Guard members and may extend a Guard member's service beyond age 64, upon request of an active member of the Guard. Extensions may be granted for one year if:

- the member is physically and mentally capable of completing all assigned mission tasks;
- the Washington State Guard Officer Review Board recommends the extension; and
- the member is willing to sign a statement releasing the Guard and the Military Department of liability for physical or mental injuries resulting from or related to the member's age, if the member is over the age of 68.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: The Washington State Guard is a state service with volunteer-only members and provides an opportunity for people to serve their country while still maintaining their employment elsewhere. There are many people who love serving their country, these are great volunteers. This bill allows people to continue that work.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Representative Brad Klippert, Prime Sponsor.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.