

SENATE BILL REPORT

ESHB 2305

AS REPORTED BY COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS, FEBRUARY 24, 1992

Brief Description: Creating fire commissioner districts within merged fire protection districts.

SPONSORS: House Committee on Local Government (originally sponsored by Representatives Haugen, Ferguson, Dorn, Horn, Bray and Rasmussen)

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators McCaslin, Chairman; Madsen, and Sutherland.

Staff: Eugene Green (786-7405)

Hearing Dates: February 24, 1992

BACKGROUND:

A fire protection district is governed by a board of commissioners consisting of either three or five members. The commissioners are elected to staggered six-year terms of office on an at-large basis.

The laws for some other special districts permit or require the use of commissioner districts. Some special districts, including fire protection districts, are not allowed to create commissioner districts. Some special districts, such as sewer districts or water districts, may use commissioner districts. Other special districts, such as public utility districts and most port districts, must use commissioner districts.

SUMMARY:

A fire protection district may create commissioner districts if a resolution submitting the ballot proposition to the voters is adopted by a unanimous vote of the fire commissioners and the voters of the district approve a ballot proposition authorizing commissioner districts.

If authorized, the fire commissioners divide the fire protection district into either three or five commissioner districts each with approximately equal population, depending on whether the district has three or five commissioners. A candidate for commissioner, and a commissioner, must reside in the commissioner district. Voters must reside in a

commissioner district to vote at a primary to nominate candidates from the commissioner district. However, voters throughout the entire fire protection district vote at a general election to elect a commissioner.

Provision is made for the option of eventually using commissioner districts in a fire protection district that results from the merging of two or more fire protection districts.

Whenever two or more fire protection districts merge, the resulting district may chose to be identified by the number associated with any of the districts that merged.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: none requested

TESTIMONY FOR:

It will enhance and encourage fire protection districts to look at the possibility of consolidation of fire districts in order to reduce duplication of services and training.

TESTIMONY AGAINST: None

TESTIFIED: Roger Ferris, WA Fire Comm. Assoc.