

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6543

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Parks, Fish & Wildlife, February 3, 2004

Title: An act relating to annexing park districts.

Brief Description: Providing for metropolitan park districts.

Sponsors: Senators Carlson, Oke, Shin, Jacobsen and Haugen.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Parks, Fish & Wildlife: 2/2/04, 2/3/04 [DPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON PARKS, FISH & WILDLIFE

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6543 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Oke, Chair; Sheahan, Vice Chair; Doumit, Jacobsen, Morton, Spanel and Swecker.

Staff: Kari Guy (786-7437)

Background: A metropolitan park district may be created for the management and acquisition of parks and recreation facilities. A metropolitan park district may include territory located in one or more cities or counties.

Formation of a metropolitan park district may be initiated by petition of 15 percent of voters in the area to be included, or by resolution of the local governing bodies. The proposition must then be voted on at a general or special election. At the same election determining creation of the district, the composition of the metropolitan park board is determined.

A metropolitan park district may impose two separate regular property tax levies on all property located in the district: (1) a levy not to exceed \$0.50 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation; and (2) a levy not to exceed \$0.25 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation. The metropolitan park district board may levy a property tax in excess of the regular property tax levy with approval of the voters. The metropolitan park district levies are subject to the constitutional 1 percent limitation on property taxes that applies to all taxing district levies.

Areas within a city may be withdrawn from a metropolitan park district by resolution of the metropolitan park district board requesting the withdrawal, and by resolution of the city council approving the withdrawal.

The statutes governing metropolitan park districts are silent on the creation of districts with areas that are not contiguous.

Summary of Substitute Bill: A county planning under the Growth Management Act may propose creating a metropolitan park district after the effective date of this act, consisting of

unincorporated portions of an urban growth area, if there is a joint provision of parks and recreation services by the city and county, or there is an interlocal agreement between the county and city metropolitan park district.

A metropolitan park district within unincorporated portions of an urban growth area may include areas geographically isolated from each other.

If a portion of a metropolitan park district created after the effective date of this act is annexed to a city, that area is automatically excluded from the district. The city and county must develop an interlocal agreement to disburse assets and debt in an orderly and equitable manner.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The changes to the metropolitan park district statute apply only to districts created after the effective date of the act.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: In county areas surrounding Vancouver there is overwhelming support for a metropolitan park district. This clarifies that a district may contain areas that are not contiguous, and provides a mechanism to return the areas to the city if areas are annexed.

Testimony Against: This should be made prospective only so that it does not affect existing metropolitan park districts.

Testified: Sharon Wylie, Clark County (pro); David Judd, Van Clark Parks and Rec. (pro); Deborah Abraham, Parks and Rec Commission, Clark County (pro); Randy Lewis, City of Tacoma (pro w/amendment); Dawn Vyvyan, Washington Park and Recreation Assn. (pro).