

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6238

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Government Operations & Elections, January 24, 2008

Title: An act relating to assessed valuation requirements for the direct petition method of annexation.

Brief Description: Modifying assessed valuation requirements for the direct petition method of annexation.

Sponsors: Senator Fairley.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Government Operations & Elections: 1/22/08, 1/24/08 [DP, DNP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & ELECTIONS

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Fairley, Chair; Oemig, Vice Chair; Kline, McDermott, Pridemore and Swecker.

Minority Report: Do not pass.

Signed by Senators Roach, Ranking Minority Member; Benton.

Staff: Khalia Gibson (786-7460)

Background: Classified cities are organized under RCW Title 35. Classified cities have multiple processes to annex territory, including a resolution/election method, a petition/election method, and a direct petition method. Each method of annexation must follow different processes set forth in statute.

Under the direct petition method of annexation, the petition for annexation must be signed by owners of not less than 75 percent of the assessed value of the property subject to the annexation.

Summary of Bill: The property ownership signature requirement for annexation petitions under the direct petition method of annexation for classified cities is reduced from 75 percent to 60 percent.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: The Growth Management Act encourages both code and non-code cities to annex. Code cities currently have a 60 percent signature requirement, so there is no balance with the current approach of differing signature requirements for code and non-code cities. This bill does not add a new method, it simply encourages uniformity by making the signature requirement the same between code and non-code cities. There is no other statutory requirement in support of the 75 percent requirement.

CON: While it is obvious that cities need to grow, there is also a concern for the protection and safety of the people left in the area after annexation. This bill does not encourage the democratic process because owners of larger parcels will determine the governance of the entire area. The issue needs to be looked at more broadly taking these things into consideration. The general issue of annexation should be handled first, then secondly look at lowering the signature requirement. Lowering the percentage does not make annexation easier, it only means that less citizens are now making the decision on whether to annex.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Dave Williams, Association of Washington Cities; Susan C. Wallace, City of Vancouver.

CON: Ryan Spiller, Washington Fire Commissioners Association.