

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5454

As Amended by House, April 5, 2017

Title: An act relating to allowing fire protection district annexations and mergers within a reasonable geographic proximity and eliminating cross-county restrictions for annexations to a fire protection district.

Brief Description: Allowing fire protection district annexations and mergers within a reasonable geographic proximity and eliminating cross-county restrictions for annexations to a fire protection district.

Sponsors: Senator Frockt.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Local Government: 1/31/17, 2/09/17 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed Senate: 3/01/17, 47-2.

Passed House: 4/05/17, 83-14.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Permits a city or town to annex to a fire protection district if it is located within a reasonable proximity to that fire protection district.
- Removes provisions allowing partial cities to annex to fire protection districts.
- Permits a fire protection district to merge with another fire protection district if it is located within a reasonable proximity to that district.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Short, Chair; Angel, Vice Chair; Takko, Ranking Minority Member; Palumbo and Sheldon.

Staff: Alex Fairfortune (786-7416)

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.

Background: Fire Protection Districts. Fire protection districts (districts) are municipal corporations created to provide fire and emergency services in locations outside of cities and towns. Districts are governed by a board of three, five, or seven elected fire commissioners.

Annexation. A district may annex an adjacent city or town if that city or town has a population of 300,000 or fewer. If a city or town is located in two counties and at least 80 percent of the population resides in one county, the portion with 80 percent of the population may annex to a district. In order to annex, that partial city must have a population between 5000 and 10,000 people and be adjacent to the district. Annexation requires a majority vote of approval from both city and district voters.

Merger. Adjacent districts may merge with each other. A merger may occur if three-fifths of electors residing in the merging district sign a petition to merge, or by a majority vote of approval by the merging district's electors.

Summary of Bill: A city or town may annex to a district if it is located within a reasonable proximity to that district, rather than adjacent. A partial city may no longer annex to a district. A district may merge with another district if it is located within a reasonable proximity to that district, rather than adjacent.

Reasonable proximity means a geographical separation that does not jeopardize the effective operations of the district.

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: None.

Persons Testifying: No one.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: CON: Lisa Hayes, Washington for Good Policing.

EFFECT OF HOUSE AMENDMENT(S):

- Modifies the definition of reasonable proximity to mean geographical areas near enough to each other so that governance, management, and services can be delivered effectively.