

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1669

As Reported by House Committee On: Local Government

Title: An act relating to expanding the allowable powers of fire protection districts.

Brief Description: Expanding the allowable powers of fire protection districts.

Sponsors: Representatives Eslick, Sutherland, Griffey, Lovick, Stanford and Mead.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Local Government: 2/8/19, 2/13/19 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Authorizes fire protection districts to: (1) enter into interlocal agreements to provide vehicle repair and maintenance for local jurisdictions; and (2) provide any ordinary maintenance and administrative services that the district performs in support of its powers and purpose.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 5 members: Representatives Pollet, Chair; Peterson, Vice Chair; Griffey, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Goehner and Senn.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 1 member: Representative Kraft, Ranking Minority Member.

Staff: Yvonne Walker (786-7841).

Background:

A fire protection district (district) is a type of special purpose district created to provide fire prevention, fire suppression, and emergency medical services within a district's boundaries, which can include incorporated and unincorporated areas.

Districts are authorized to:

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.

- lease, operate, and provide fire and emergency medical apparatus and all other necessary facilities and equipment for the prevention and suppression of fires, provide emergency medical services, and the protection of life and property;
- lease, own, maintain, and operate real property for housing, repairing, and maintaining their apparatus, facilities, machinery, and equipment;
- contract with other governmental or private entities to consolidate, provide, or cooperate for fire prevention, protection, fire suppression, investigation, and emergency medical purposes;
- encourage uniformity and coordination of district operations;
- enter into contracts for life insurance for fire district personnel;
- perform building and property inspections that the district deems necessary to provide fire prevention services and prefire planning within the district; and
- determine the origin and cause of fires occurring within the district.

Generally, districts serve residents outside of cities or towns, except when cities and towns have been annexed into a district or when the district continues to provide service to a newly incorporated area. The districts are governed by an elected board of commissioners consisting of either three or five members.

Summary of Bill:

The powers of fire protection districts are expanded.

In addition to its current allowable powers, a district is authorized to: (1) enter into interlocal agreements with local jurisdictions to maintain and repair vehicles owned and used exclusively by a county, city, town, school district, or other political subdivision of Washington; and (2) directly provide and enter into an interlocal agreement with any local government entity to provide, or contract with any local government entity to provide, ordinary maintenance services, and any administrative services that the district performs in support of its powers and purpose. A district is also explicitly authorized to provide maintenance and repair of school buses.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) The Snohomish fire district has been in an interlocal regional maintenance program with a multitude of local agencies for over 25 years. They have provided various services to water-sewer districts, the City of Monroe, and a small school district. The

Snohomish County fire district also has a maintenance shop where they often work on other fire department vehicles, school buses, and city-owned vehicles. However, a recent audit by the State Auditor noted that the district did not have the authority or powers to conduct vehicle maintenance for other agencies. The main issue is that the district was providing vehicle maintenance services to non-fire-related agencies. This audit has caused a financial hardship on the school district and the city.

This bill will allow the district to continue to work on both school district owned vehicles as well as city-owned vehicles, while also providing services that are mutually beneficial to fire districts and other agencies.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Eslick, prime sponsor; and Steve Guptill, Snohomish County Fire District 7.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.