

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5249

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Local Government, February 5, 2019

Title: An act relating to eliminating certain requirements for the annexation of an unincorporated island of territory.

Brief Description: Eliminating certain requirements for the annexation of an unincorporated island of territory.

Sponsors: Senator Hunt.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Local Government: 1/29/19, 2/05/19 [DP, w/oRec].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Eliminates certain requirements for the annexation of an unincorporated island of territory by a code city.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Takko, Chair; Salomon, Vice Chair; Short, Ranking Member; Liias.

Minority Report: That it be referred without recommendation.

Signed by Senator Honeyford.

Staff: Greg Vogel (786-7413)

Background: The unincorporated islands method of annexation enables the annexation of territory that is wholly or mostly surrounded by incorporated territory. In 2013, the Legislature amended, for code cities, the criteria for territory that can be annexed under this method. An area may be annexed by a code city under the unincorporated island method of annexation if:

- the area is less than 175 acres and all its boundaries are contiguous to the city, for example, it is entirely surrounded by the city; or

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- the area is of any size and has at least 80 percent of its boundaries contiguous to the city, it contains residential property owners, and it is within the same county and urban growth area as the city, and the code city is required to plan under the Growth Management Act.

The resolution for annexation must describe the boundaries of the area to be annexed, state the number of voters residing in the area to be annexed, and set a date for a public hearing. Additionally, annexations under this method are subject to potential referendum for 45 days after the passage of the annexation ordinance.

Summary of Bill: The resolution for annexation of an unincorporated island of territory by a code city no longer must state the number of voters residing in the area to be annexed.

The annexation of an unincorporated island of territory by a code city is no longer subject to potential referendum by voters in the area to be annexed, or potential review by a boundary review board.

At the public hearing for annexation, all members of the public must be afforded an opportunity to be heard, in addition to residents or property owners of the area being annexed.

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: PRO: This issue was brought up by the city of Lacey. Lacey and Olympia have a number of islands that cause problems in terms of providing services and how those services are paid for. The areas are almost completely surrounded by the cities and are completely urbanized. It is logical that cities are the providers of urban services, as provided by the GMA. Islands also cause a host of difficulties for counties and increase costs for counties. They request levels of service that counties are not able to provide.

This bill is a good way to deal with these islands. This is a matter of working collaboratively to help deliver services more efficiently. The bill still retains the ability for citizens of the city and residents to participate in public hearings to voice comments, concerns, and merits of annexation.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Sam Hunt, Prime Sponsor; Brian Enslow, City of Lacey; Rick Walk, City of Lacey; Paul Jewell, Washington State Association of Counties.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.