

FINAL BILL REPORT

SB 5519

C 54 L 20
Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Concerning mosquito control districts.

Sponsors: Senators Cleveland, King, Takko, Warnick, Short, Braun, Wilson, L. and Honeyford.

Senate Committee on Local Government
House Committee on Local Government

Background: Mosquito Control Districts. Mosquito control districts are special purpose districts created to protect public health, safety, and welfare by abating or exterminating mosquitoes within the district. Districts may be comprised of all or a portion of one or more counties and are controlled by a five-member board of trustees.

Mosquito control districts have powers enumerated in statute, including the power to:

- take all necessary or proper steps to exterminate mosquitoes;
- abate as nuisances all stagnant pools of water and other breeding places for mosquitoes;
- build, construct, repair, and maintain necessary dikes, levees, cuts, canals, or ditches upon any land, and acquire any lands, rights-of-way, easements, property, or other necessary material to carry out its duties; and
- enter any lands within the district to ascertain whether mosquito breeding places exist on the land, to abate public nuisances, to ascertain if notices to abate mosquito breeding places have been complied with, or to treat with oil or other larvicidal material any mosquito breeding places.

Assessments. Mosquito control districts are funded through assessments on all property in the district. The amount of the assessment is determined by the value of a property and the proportionate benefit it receives from the district's services.

The county legislative authority must, by resolution, provide: (1) the time frame assessments must be paid; (2) the entity responsible for collecting assessment payments and collection of interest; and (3) the rate of interest to be charged on that portion of any assessment which remains unpaid over 30 days after the assessment payment due date. Upon passage of a resolution, delinquent assessments may also incur a penalty totaling not less than 5 percent as prescribed by resolution. All interest and penalties incurred become a part of the assessment lien on the property. Once property is charged a mosquito control district assessment, the assessment becomes a lien upon the property at the time the assessment rolls are turned over

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to the county treasurer for collection. The county road improvement district statutes govern the process for handling liens; the collection and payment of current and delinquent assessments, interest, and penalties; and property foreclosures on behalf of mosquito control districts.

County Road Improvement District. The county road improvement district statutes authorize counties to create county road improvement districts to facilitate constructing new roads or improving existing roads and other related facilities. Counties have the power to levy and collect special assessments against the real property specially benefited by the district to pay the whole or any part of the cost of such acquisition of rights-of-way, construction, or improvement.

Property Taxes. Under property tax statutes, if property taxes have remained delinquent for three or more years, then the county treasurer must begin foreclosure activities by issuing a certificate of delinquency on the property for all years' taxes, interest, and costs. However, the county treasurer, with the consent of the county legislative authority, may elect to issue a certificate for fewer than all years' taxes, interest, and costs to a minimum of the taxes, interest, and costs for the earliest year.

County treasurers may impose an annual fee for collecting special assessments on behalf of special purpose districts.

Summary: The provisions relating to liens, collections, payment of assessments, delinquent assessments, interest and penalties, lien foreclosure and foreclosed property as applied to mosquito control districts are changed from the county road improvement district statutes to the statutes governing the collection of property taxes.

As a result, the delinquency period for unpaid mosquito control district assessments is extended to three years before a treasurer may begin any foreclosure activities. Additionally, county treasurers may impose an annual fee for collecting special assessments on behalf of mosquito control districts.

Votes on Final Passage:

2019 Regular Session

Senate 48 0

2020 Regular Session

Senate 45 0

House 97 0

Effective: June 11, 2020