

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SB 5296

As Passed House:

April 6, 2021

Title: An act relating to the definition of index for the Washington state patrol retirement system.

Brief Description: Modifying the definition of index for the Washington state patrol retirement system.

Sponsors: Senators Schoesler, Conway, Dozier, Muzzall, Rivers, Van De Wege and Warnick; by request of Select Committee on Pension Policy.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Appropriations: 3/11/21, 3/15/21 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 4/6/21, 98-0.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Changes a reference to the Consumer Price Index used to adjust the benefits for retirees of the Washington State Patrol Retirement System from the obsolete Seattle-Tacoma-Bremerton, Washington area to the Seattle, Washington area.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 33 members: Representatives Ormsby, Chair; Bergquist, Vice Chair; Gregerson, Vice Chair; Macri, Vice Chair; Stokesbary, Ranking Minority Member; Chambers, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Corry, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; MacEwen, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Boehnke, Caldier, Chandler, Chopp, Cody, Dolan, Dye, Fitzgibbon, Frame, Hansen, Harris, Hoff, Jacobsen, Johnson, J., Lekanoff, Pollet, Rude, Ryu, Schmick, Senn, Springer, Steele,

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Stonier, Sullivan and Tharinger.

Staff: David Pringle (786-7310).

Background:

The Washington State Patrol Retirement System (WSPRS) covers commissioned officers of the Washington State Patrol. Since 2003 WSPRS retiree benefits have been adjusted annually based specifically on the consumer price index (CPI) for the Seattle-Tacoma-Bremerton, Washington area for urban wage earners and clerical workers, up to 3 percent each year.

In 2018 the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, which is responsible for producing the CPIs nationally, modified the geographic sample of the Seattle, Washington area CPI to no longer include Island, Kitsap, and Thurston counties. It was renamed the Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue CPI.

Even though retirees from other pension systems have their benefits adjusted based on the same index, other statutes related to the adjustments include a general reference to the Seattle, Washington area CPI rather than identifying it by the specific name.

Summary of Bill:

The reference to Tacoma-Bremerton is removed from the statute that defines the index used to adjust the benefits for retirees of the WSPRS.

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) This bill is really just a technical update for a CPI that was used in the past, referencing specific cities. This will bring the WSPRS in line with the other state retirement systems administered by the Department of Retirement Systems.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Davor Gjurasic, Washington State Patrol Troopers Association; Shawn Merchant, Washington State Department of Retirement Systems; and Jeff DeVere, Washington State Patrol Lieutenants and Captains Association.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.