

Senate Fiscal Agency
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Senate Bill 956 (Substitute S-2 as reported)
Sponsor: Senator Bill Bullard, Jr.
Committee: Local, Urban and State Affairs

Date Completed: 2-28-00

RATIONALE

Under Public Act 164 of 1877, the city council of each incorporated city may establish and maintain a public library and reading room for the use and benefit of the city inhabitants. When a city council decides to establish and maintain a public library and reading room, the mayor of the city must, with the approval of the city council, proceed to appoint a board of five directors for the library, chosen from the citizens at large; not more than one member of the city council may be at any one time a member of the library board. Other than the first members appointed, board members serve five-year terms. Some people believe that flexibility in board membership and terms of service would allow for more participation and representation, especially in growing cities.

CONTENT

The bill would amend Public Act 164 of 1877 to provide that after the first appointments of the five-member board of directors for a public library and reading room, if a city council decided that the purposes of the library and reading room would better served by a greater or lesser number of members on the board, the city council could by ordinance change the number of members to not fewer than five or more than nine. The term of office for each board member also could be changed by ordinance to a term of not less than two years or more than five years. If the term of office were changed by ordinance by a city council, the term of office for subsequent appointments by the mayor would have to be the same as prescribed by the ordinance.

MCL 397.202

ARGUMENTS

(Please note: The arguments contained in this analysis originate from sources outside the Senate Fiscal Agency. The Senate Fiscal Agency neither supports nor opposes legislation.)

Supporting Argument

A library board makes important decisions concerning the library and reading room, on issues such as the library fund, supervision and care, and purchase or lease of grounds for an appropriate building for the library and reading room. Reportedly, it can be common for one member of a library board to be absent from board meetings, and a board president might vote only in the event of a tie. This means that only three people are making decisions that can affect a city's entire population. By allowing a city council to expand the number of board member appointments, the bill would allow for better representation of the growing population in some cities. In addition, a set term of five years is a long commitment for some board members to make. The bill would allow for flexibility in the determination of terms of service.

Legislative Analyst: N. Nagata

FISCAL IMPACT

The bill would have no fiscal impact on State or local government.

Fiscal Analyst: R. Ross

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This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan Senate staff for use by the Senate in its deliberations and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.