

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES LOCAL BILL STAFF ANALYSIS

BILL #: HB 1607

South Walton Fire District, Walton County

SPONSOR(S): Coley

TIED BILLS:

IDEN./SIM. BILLS:

REFERENCE	ACTION	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR
1) <u>Committee on Urban & Local Affairs</u>	<u>7 Y, 0 N</u>	<u>Fudge</u>	<u>Kruse</u>
2) <u>Government Efficiency & Accountability Council</u>	<u>10 Y, 0 N</u>	<u>Fudge</u>	<u>Cooper</u>
3) _____	_____	_____	_____
4) _____	_____	_____	_____
5) _____	_____	_____	_____

SUMMARY ANALYSIS

The South Walton Fire District is an independent special fire district administered by a board of seven fire commissioners. Two commissioners must be elected from each precinct in the District, and one member is elected at large.

This bill amends ch. 2000-491, L.O.F., specifying the territorial boundaries for each area in the South Walton Fire District in which an elected commissioner must reside.

This bill is effective upon becoming law.

FULL ANALYSIS

I. SUBSTANTIVE ANALYSIS

A. HOUSE PRINCIPLES ANALYSIS:

This bill does not appear to implicate any of the House Principles.

B. EFFECT OF PROPOSED CHANGES:

Current Situation

Independent special districts, including independent special fire control districts, may only be created by the Legislature. The creation of independent fire control special districts is governed by ch. 189, F.S., the "Uniform Special District Accountability Act of 1989", and ch. 191, F.S., the "Independent Special Fire Control District Act". However, the Legislature may provide an exemption from the general law requirements in chs. 189 and 191, F.S., in a local bill creating an independent special district. If a local bill creates an exemption from general law, Rule 5.5 of the Florida House of Representatives prohibits the local bill from being placed on the Special Order Calendar in any section reserved for the expedited consideration of local bills.

Chapter 189, F.S., known as the "Uniform Special District Accountability Act of 1989", includes requirements that must be satisfied when the Legislature creates any independent special district, including independent special fire control districts created under ch. 191, F.S. Unless the Legislature has enacted a special law exempting a particular independent special district, all districts must comply with applicable provisions of ch. 189, F.S., including provisions related to issues that must be addressed in a district's charter, election of district governing board members, bond referenda, public records and meetings, and reporting requirements.

The Independent Special Fire Control District

Chapter 191, F.S., is known as the "Independent Special Fire Control District Act" (the Act). Section 191.002, F.S., sets forth the Act's purpose, which is to establish standards and procedures concerning the operations and governance of independent special fire control districts (districts), and to provide greater uniformity in the financing authority, operations, and procedures for electing members of the governing boards of districts.

Unless otherwise exempted by special or general law, the Act requires each district, whether created by special act, general law of local application, or county ordinance, to comply with the Act and provides that it is the intent of the Legislature that the Act supersede all special acts or general laws of local application provisions that contain the charter of a district. Provisions that address district boundaries and geographical subdistricts for the election of members of the governing board are excepted.¹

South Walton Fire District

The South Walton Fire District is an independent special fire district under ch. 191, F.S.² The District is administered by a board of seven fire commissioners. Two commissioners must be elected from each precinct in the District, and one member is elected at large.

¹ See s. 191.005(1)(c), F.S., permitting a board of five members or more elected on a subdistrict basis to continue to elect members from such previously designated subdistricts.

² All ordinances of the South Walton Fire Control District were codified in ch. 2000-491, L.O.F.

Effect of Proposed Change

The bill establishes geographic boundaries for seats 1 and 2, seats 3 and 4, and seats 5 and 6. Seat 7 must be elected at large and reside within the District boundaries.

C. SECTION DIRECTORY:

Section 1: Amends ch. 2000-491, F.S., specifying territorial boundaries for each area of the District in which an elected commissioner must reside.

Section 2: Provides an effective date of upon becoming law.

II. NOTICE/REFERENDUM AND OTHER REQUIREMENTS

A. NOTICE PUBLISHED? Yes No

IF YES, WHEN? February 8, 2007.

WHERE? In *The Breeze* and *The Defuniak Springs Herald* published weekly in DeFuniak Springs, Florida.

B. REFERENDUM(S) REQUIRED? Yes No

IF YES, WHEN?

C. LOCAL BILL CERTIFICATION FILED? Yes, attached No

D. ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT FILED? Yes, attached No

III. COMMENTS

A. CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES:

None.

B. RULE-MAKING AUTHORITY:

None.

C. DRAFTING ISSUES OR OTHER COMMENTS:

None.

D. STATEMENT OF THE SPONSOR

No statement submitted.

IV. AMENDMENTS/COUNCIL SUBSTITUTE CHANGES

None.