

# Port Commissioner Term Lengths

*SUPPORT: SB 5370 would give voters in a port district the option of extending the terms of their commissioners from four years to six years.*



## Port Districts:

Washington's 75 port districts are independent government entities run by elected commissioners. The number of commissioners and the length of their term can differ from port to port.

## Background:

The majority of ports in Washington are run by three commissioners serving six year terms.



### 7 PORT DISTRICTS

have three commissioners serving four-year terms



### 2/3 COMMISSIONERS

every other election cycle, two-thirds of the commission is up for re-election

## CHALLENGES

At ports with three commissioners serving four year terms, every other election cycle, two-thirds of the commission is up for re-election. This can present challenges to port operations.



Loss of important institutional knowledge.



Recruiting interested candidates in port districts with small populations.



A group of single issue candidates can lack transparency.

## SOLUTIONS

Currently, language exists in statute to allow commissioner terms to be reduced from six to four years, with an affirmative vote from the residents of that district. There is no corresponding language allowing voters to extend terms.

### That's Why:

Passage of SB 5370 should give port district voters the option of extending terms from four to six years supporting good government functions, promoting transparency and open government, and assisting ports in smaller communities.

## WASHINGTON PUBLIC

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## SUPPORT

### SB 5370

Sponsored by Senators Chapman and Harris

Giving port districts the option to extend port commissioner terms from four to six years.