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SB 157: "An Act relating to municipal fire protection service area boundary changes."

Sponsor Statement

State law currently allows municipalities, without a vote of residents in a municipal fire service area, to increase the number of parcels in a fire service area if the increase is not more than six percent and would not add more than 1,000 residents. There is no corollary provision allowing municipalities, even with the full consent of the property owner(s), to decrease or transfer a small number of parcels from a fire service area. Instead, an election of the entire service area must be held to remove any parcel or make other minor changes to a fire service area boundary.

Senate Bill 157 would allow a municipality to decrease or transfer, by ordinance, a small number of parcels in a fire service area without holding an election.

In cases where a fire service area is formed or expanded, or where development has not occurred as anticipated, fire response may not originate from the most accessible station. SB 157 would simplify the process to enable fire response from the most proximate fire department. The ability to establish a less cumbersome process will allow municipalities to define more natural service area boundaries, making it easier for emergency responders to determine which parcels to serve. SB 157 also provides municipalities with the flexibility needed to adjust boundaries based on service levels available.

I urge you to support SB 157.

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