

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 1553

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### As Passed Legislature

**Title:** An act relating to elections.

**Brief Description:** Concerning the proper form of certain ballot titles.

**Sponsors:** Representative L. Thomas; by request of Attorney General.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Government Operations: 2/15/95, 2/17/95 [DP].

**Floor Activity:**

Passed House: 3/9/95, 97-0.

Passed Legislature.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

**Majority Report:** Do pass. Signed by 15 members: Representatives Reams, Chairman; Goldsmith, Vice Chairman; L. Thomas, Vice Chairman; Rust, Ranking Minority Member; Scott, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Chopp; R. Fisher; Hargrove; Honeyford; Hymes; Mulliken; D. Schmidt; Sommers; Van Luven and Wolfe.

**Staff:** Bonnie Austin (786-7135).

**Background:** When a proposed constitutional amendment or other measure is submitted to a vote of the people, the attorney general is required to prepare a concise statement of not more than 20 words, posed as a question, containing the essential features of the measure. This concise statement constitutes the ballot title.

Referendum bills are bills enacted and sent to the people by the Legislature. When a petition has been filed against a state legislative enactment, it is called a referendum measure. In 1993, the Legislature passed HB 1645, which increased the number of words allowed in the concise statement to 25 for referendum measures filed on state legislative enactments.

**Summary of Bill:** The number of words allowed in the concise statement for constitutional amendments, initiatives, and referendum bills is increased to 25.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not Requested.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

**Testimony For:** Complex proposals require more than 20 words of explanation. This makes the attorney general's concise statement the same length for all measures submitted to the people.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Testified:** Representative Les Thomas, prime sponsor.