
SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 5303

State of Washington

52nd Legislature

1991 Regular Session

By Senate Committee on Governmental Operations (originally sponsored by Senator Talmadge).

Read first time February 25, 1991.

1 AN ACT Relating to state and local initiative and referendum ballot
2 titles; amending RCW 29.79.040; adding a new section to chapter 29.79
3 RCW; and repealing RCW 35.17.320.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 **Sec. 1.** RCW 29.79.040 and 1982 c 116 s 4 are each amended to read
6 as follows:

7 Within seven calendar days after the receipt of an initiative or
8 referendum measure the attorney general shall formulate and transmit to
9 the secretary of state a concise statement (~~((posed as a question and))~~)
10 not to exceed twenty words, bearing the serial number of the measure
11 and a summary of the measure, not to exceed seventy-five words, to
12 follow the statement. The statement may be distinct from the
13 legislative title of the measure, and shall give a true and impartial
14 statement of the purpose of the measure. Neither the statement nor the
15 summary may intentionally be an argument, nor likely to create

1 prejudice, either for or against the measure. Such concise statement
2 shall constitute the ballot title. The ballot title formulated by the
3 attorney general shall be the ballot title of the measure unless
4 changed on appeal. (~~When practicable, the question posed by the~~
5 ~~ballot title shall be written in such a way that an affirmative answer~~
6 ~~to such question and an affirmative vote on the measure would result in~~
7 ~~a change in then current law, and a negative answer to the question and~~
8 ~~a negative vote on the measure would result in no change to then~~
9 ~~current law.~~)

10 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 29.79 RCW
11 to read as follows:

12 All initiative and referendum ballots whether as part of a state-
13 wide election or as part of a county, city, or other local election
14 shall, when practicable, be written as follows:

15 "For the proposed law:"

16 "(followed by a statement of the nature of the proposed law).

17 "Against the proposed law:"

18 "(followed by a statement of the nature of the proposed law).

19 On state-wide initiative and referendum ballots, the statement of
20 the nature of the proposed law shall be the concise statement prepared
21 by the attorney general pursuant to RCW 29.79.040 unless changed on
22 appeal.

23 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** RCW 35.17.320 and 1965 c 7 s 35.17.320
24 are each repealed.