

SENATE BILL REPORT

SJR 8208

**AS REPORTED BY COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS,
FEBRUARY 10, 1993**

Brief Description: Changing procedures for filling vacancies in certain elective offices.

SPONSORS: Senators Snyder, Gaspard, Wojahn, Bauer and Winsley

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Haugen, Chairman; Drew, Vice Chairman; Loveland, Oke, Owen, von Reichbauer, and Winsley.

Staff: Rod McAulay (786-7754)

Hearing Dates: February 5, 1993; February 10, 1993

BACKGROUND:

The process to fill vacancies in state legislative positions and partisan county offices is governed by Article II, Section 15 of the State Constitution. County offices and legislative offices in districts situated entirely within one county are filled by a person chosen by the board of county commissioners from three nominees of the county central committee of the party of the person whose office has been vacated.

Vacancies in legislative districts which encompass more than one county are filled by a person selected by a joint action of the boards of county commissioners from each county involved from three nominees selected by the state central committee of the party of the person whose office has been vacated.

If the county commissioners are unable to make a selection within 60 days after the vacancy occurs, the Governor shall make the choice within 30 days thereafter from the same nominees.

The person selected holds office until a successor is elected at the next general election.

SUMMARY:

Vacancies in either house of the Legislature or in a partisan county office are filled by the person chosen by the appropriate board or boards of county commissioners from three nominees selected by the precinct committee persons of the same political party and from the same county or district as the legislator or county officer whose office has been vacated.

Nominees shall be designated within 14 days of the occurrence of the vacancy. If the county commissioners cannot agree on a selection within 28 days of the vacancy, the Governor shall make a selection within 28 days thereafter.

The appointee to a legislative vacancy shall hold office until a successor is elected at the next general election held in an even-numbered year. Appointees to county partisan positions shall hold office until a successor is elected at the next general election.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: none requested

TESTIMONY FOR:

The process for filling vacancies in the Legislature and county partisan offices is made more timely and democratic. The nominating authority is shifted from the county or state central committees to the precinct officers from the affected district. The timeframes are shortened from a maximum of 90 days to 56 days. Appointees are allowed to hold office until the next even-year general election.

TESTIMONY AGAINST: None

TESTIFIED: Senator Snyder, prime sponsor