

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1553

As Reported By House Committee On:

Government Operations

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].

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.