

# HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Olympia, Washington

## Bil Analysis

Bil No. HB 2068

Dividing legislative districts into two subdistricts.

Brief title

Hearing Date 2/26/99

Reps Dunsheer and Schmidt,  
Sponsor(s)

Staff Steve Andin  
State Government Committee  
Phone 786-7127

### BACKGROUND:

State voters approved Amendment 74 to the state constitution in 1983 providing for a commission to redistrict legislative districts. A redistricting commission is created every year in January of each year ending in a one. The Legislature is required to enact legislation implementing the amendment.

Each commission is composed of five members. The legislature divides each of the two largest political caucuses in each house of the Legislature and appoints persons to the commission. The appointments are made by January 31. The five persons are appointed by the four appointed by the supreme court and the appointment of the fifth person is made by the other four members by February 5.

Each commission shall complete its redistricting plan by January 1 of the next year. At least three members of the commission must approve the redistricting plan. The supreme court shall adopt the redistricting plan by April 30 of the year if the commission fails to adopt a plan by January 1.

The Legislature may amend the redistricting plan by a two-thirds vote of the members selected in each house with 30 days of the first legislative session occurring after the commission submits a plan.

Each district shall have a population, including residents and transient persons, equal to the population of each district to the extent a reasonably equal district shall be contiguous territory, shall be compact and convenient, shall be separated from adjoining districts by a natural geographic barrier, and shall not be drawn for the purpose of favoring or discriminating against any political party or group.

Article II, Section 2 of the state constitution provides that the House of Representatives shall be composed of between 63 and 99 members and that the Senate shall be composed of senators not less than thirty

more than half the number of members of the House of Representatives.

Statute provides 49 legislative districts. The Senate shall be composed of 49 members, one elected from each of the 49 legislative districts. The House of Representatives shall be composed of 98 members, two of whom shall be elected from and run at large with each legislative district.

**SUMMARY:**

The commission required to draw two subdistricts in each legislative district, denoted subdistrict A and B, one member of the House of Representatives to be elected from each legislative subdistrict.

The same general requirements for drawing districts apply to drawing subdistricts, including the requirement that each subdistrict contain approximately the same population and boundaries should be drawn to coincide with the boundaries of public subdivisions. Boundaries should be composed of convenient, compact and contiguous territory.

**FISCAL NOTE:** Not requested.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill passed.