

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 6596

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As Reported By Senate Committee On:  
State & Local Government, February 2, 2000

**Title:** An act relating to legislative hearings on initiatives and referendums.

**Brief Description:** Requiring legislative hearings on initiatives and referendums.

**Sponsors:** Senators Costa, Patterson, Oke and Kohl-Welles.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** State & Local Government: 1/26/2000, 2/2/2000 [DPS, DNP].

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON STATE & LOCAL GOVERNMENT

**Majority Report:** That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6596 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Patterson, Chair; Gardner, Vice Chair; Haugen and Kline.

**Minority Report:** Do not pass.

Signed by Senators Horn and McCaslin.

**Staff:** Diane Smith (786-7410)

**Background:** The Washington State Constitution provides for the powers of initiative and referendum in Article II, Section 1 as powers reserved by the people. The Legislature implemented the powers of initiative and referendum in statute. The process does not provide for legislative hearings on the issues raised by initiative or referendum.

The campaign financing section of the public disclosure law and the ethics in public service law both prohibit the use of public facilities to promote or oppose a ballot proposition.

**Summary of Substitute Bill:** The Legislature must hold public hearings on initiative or referendum measures that have been certified by the Secretary of State and at a time no less than 30 days before the vote of the people on the measures.

The hearings are held by the appropriate committees of the Senate and House of Representatives.

No constitutional rights are diminished. No right to claim invalidity of the measure is created.

The campaign finance law and ethics law are amended to allow legislative hearings on initiative and referendum measures before the measures are submitted to a vote of the people.

**Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:** The substitute bill includes a conforming amendment to the ethics law.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

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

**Testimony For:** None.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Testified:** No one.