

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SJR 8207

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As Reported By Senate Committee On:  
State & Local Government, January 24, 2000

**Brief Description:** Extending length of legislative terms.

**Sponsors:** Senator McCaslin.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** State & Local Government: 2/25/99, 3/3/99 [DP]; 1/19/00, 1/24/00 [DP].

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON STATE & LOCAL GOVERNMENT

**Majority Report:** Do pass.

Signed by Senators Gardner, Vice Chair; Hale, Horn and McCaslin.

**Staff:** Roger Brodniak (786-7445)

**Background:** Members of the Washington State House of Representatives are elected biennially and serve two-year terms. State senators serve four-year terms, with one-half of the senators standing for election every two years.

**Summary of Bill:** Members of the Washington House of Representatives are elected for terms of four years. Representatives serve staggered terms with one-half of the House standing for election every two years. At the next general election, occurring in November 2000, the candidate in each representative district who receives the most votes is elected to a four-year term. The candidate in each district who receives the second highest number of votes is elected to a two-year term. Elections for House members are held during each even-numbered year.

State senators are elected for terms of six years. Senators serve staggered terms, with one-third of the Senate standing for election every two years. This is accomplished by phasing in the six-year term through three election cycles, beginning in 2000.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

**Testimony For:** It reduces the tendency for candidates to be constantly asking for money.

**Testimony Against:** Elected officials should be more accountable to the people. It might better be handled by term limits.

**Testified:** Senator Bob McCaslin, prime sponsor (pro); Paul Telford, Reform Party (neutral); Merton Cooper (con).