

State Government

HB 1225

Brief Description: *Establishing two senatorial districts in Washington.*

Sponsors: *Representatives Clements, Wood, B. Chandler, G. Chandler, McMorris, Schindler, Lisk, Boldt, Sump, Mulliken, Schoesler, Benson, D. Schmidt, Armstrong, Delvin and Skinner.*

Brief Summary of Bill

- *Establishes two senatorial districts in Washington.*
- *Requires candidates for United States Senate to reside in the senatorial district he or she represents.*

Hearing Date: *2/2/01*

Staff: *Jim Morishima (786-7191).*

Background:

The United States Constitution imposes the following qualifications on a candidate for the United States Senate:

- *The candidate must be at least thirty years of age;*
- *The candidate must have been a citizen of the United States for at least nine years; and*
- *The candidate must reside in the state he or she represents.*

In general, state laws imposing extra qualifications on candidates for United States Senate are unconstitutional.

United States Senators are elected for six year terms. The terms are staggered to ensure that elections for a state's two Senate seats are in different years. Members of the Senate were originally elected by the state legislatures, but the Seventeenth Amendment to the United States Constitution placed the responsibility for electing Senators with the people in 1913.

The five-member state Redistricting commission was established by constitutional amendment in 1983. The purpose of the commission is to provide for the redistricting of state legislative and congressional districts. The commission does this by submitting a redistricting plan to the Legislature every ten years based on the federal decennial census.

Summary of Bill:

The Redistricting Commission must establish two senatorial districts in Washington. The districts must have approximately equal populations and must be divided by a line running north to south. A candidate for the United States Senate must reside in the district he or she represents, but would still be elected on a state-wide basis.

Rulemaking Authority: *No express authority.*

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

Appropriation: *None.*

Fiscal Note: *Not Requested.*