

*State Government*

**HB 1559**

**Brief Description:** *Requiring more official information about initiatives.*

**Sponsors:** *Representative McDermott.*

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- *Requires the Attorney General to prepare a comprehensive summary for each initiative and any alternative measure proposed by the legislature.*
- *Requires the Office of Financial Management to prepare a fiscal note for each initiative and any alternative measure proposed by the legislature.*
- *Requires the comprehensive summaries and fiscal notes to be posted on the Internet and in the voters' pamphlet.*

**Hearing Date:** *2/9/01*

**Staff:** *Serena Dolly (786-7093), Jim Morishima (786-7191).*

**Background:**

*The Washington State Constitution provides for two types of initiatives: initiatives to the people and initiatives to the legislature.*

*After voter approval, initiatives to the people are enacted into law. Within two years of enactment, a voter approved initiative may not be repealed by the Legislature and may only be amended by two-thirds vote.*

*After voter approval, initiatives to the legislature are submitted to the Legislature at its regular January session. The Legislature may:*

- *Pass the initiative, in which case it becomes law;*
- *Do nothing, in which case the initiative is placed on the next general election ballot;*

*or*

- *Pass an alternative to the initiative, in which case the alternative measure appears along with the original initiative on the next general election ballot.*

*The voters' pamphlet must provide a variety of initiative information to voters, including:*

- *A brief statement from the Attorney General explaining the law as it currently exists;*
- *A brief statement from the Attorney General explaining the effect of the proposed measure if approved into law;*
- *A written statement from proponents advocating voter approval of the measure; and*
- *A written statement from opponents advocating voter rejection of the measure.*

***Summary of Bill:***

*The Attorney General must prepare a comprehensive summary for each initiative and any alternative measure proposed by the legislature. The comprehensive summary must include a detailed description of the initiative or alternative measure, a discussion of potential constitutional issues, and an executive summary.*

*The Office of Financial Management must prepare a fiscal note for each initiative and any alternative measure proposed by the legislature. The fiscal note must describe any projected increases or decreases in revenues, costs, expenditures, or indebtedness that will be experienced by state and local governments and an executive summary.*

*The comprehensive summary and the fiscal note must be included in the voters' pamphlet, with the executive summaries highlighted, and must be available online at the Secretary of State's website.*

***Rulemaking Authority:*** *No express authority.*

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

***Appropriation:*** *None.*

***Fiscal Note:*** *Requested on February 1, 2001.*