

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6296

As Passed Senate, January 14, 2002

Title: An act relating to the timeline for submission of a redistricting plan by the redistricting commission.

Brief Description: Revising timelines for redistricting plans.

Sponsors: Senators Snyder, West, Horn, Carlson and T. Sheldon; by request of Attorney General and Redistricting Commission.

Brief History:

Passed Senate: 1/14/02, 48-1.

Staff: Eugene Green (786-7405)

Background: State law currently contains two provisions establishing a deadline for approval and submission of a redistricting plan by the Redistricting Commission appointed after each decennial census. The state Constitution establishes a deadline of January 1 of each year ending in two. The implementing legislation provided for the same deadline until 1995 when legislation changed the statutory deadline to December 15 of each year ending in one. After submission of a plan in accordance with the deadline, the Legislature has 30 days in the next session to make limited changes in the plan, with a two-thirds vote. Both the Constitution and the statute give the task of redrawing legislative and congressional boundaries to the state Supreme Court if the commission fails to meet the deadline. The court must adopt a plan by March 1. The Redistricting Commission appointed in 2001 approved a legislative map on December 16, 2001 and a congressional map on January 1, 2002.

Summary of Bill: The statutory deadline of December 15 of each year ending in one is changed to January 1 of each year ending in two, making the statutory and constitutional deadlines identical. The change is made retroactive and thus applies to the redistricting plan adopted and submitted by the 2001 Redistricting Commission.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.