

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5502

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
State Government, Tribal Relations & Elections, February 15, 2019

Title: An act relating to alignment of statutory deadlines to the Constitution.

Brief Description: Aligning statutory redistricting deadlines to the Constitution.

Sponsors: Senators Zeiger and Hunt; by request of Secretary of State.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: State Government, Tribal Relations & Elections: 2/06/19, 2/15/19 [DPS].

Brief Summary of First Substitute Bill

- Moves the statutory deadline for the Redistricting Commission to complete the redistricting plan to November 15th of each year ending in one.
- Moves the statutory deadline for the Supreme Court to adopt a redistricting plan, if the Commission fails to adopt a plan in a timely fashion, to April 30th of the year ending in two.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT, TRIBAL RELATIONS & ELECTIONS

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5502 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Hunt, Chair; Kuderer, Vice Chair; Zeiger, Ranking Member; Bailey, Hasegawa, Hawkins and Takko.

Staff: Samuel Brown (786-7470)

Background: The State Redistricting Commission (Commission) was established by constitutional amendment in 1983 to provide for redistricting state legislative and congressional districts every ten years based on the federal decennial census. The Commission is composed of five members. The legislative leaders of each of the two largest political caucuses in each house of the Legislature appoint one person to the Commission.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

These appointments must be made by January 31st. The fifth person is appointed by the four appointees. The Supreme Court makes the appointment of the fifth person if the appointment is not made by the other four members by February 5th.

Under statute, at least three members of the Commission must approve the redistricting plan by no later than January 1st of each year ending in two. However, in 2016, voters approved Senate Joint Resolution 8210, which requires approval of the redistricting plan under the Washington state Constitution by November 15th of each year ending in one.

Under statute, the Supreme Court must adopt a redistricting plan by March 1st of the year ending in two if the Commission fails to adopt a plan in a timely fashion. Under the Washington state Constitution, if the Commission fails to adopt a plan in a timely fashion, the Supreme Court must adopt a redistricting plan by April 30th of the year ending in two.

Summary of Bill (First Substitute): The statutory deadline for the Commission to approve the redistricting plan is moved to November 15th of each year ending in one.

The statutory deadline for the Supreme Court to adopt a redistricting plan, if the Commission fails to adopt a plan in a timely fashion, is moved to April 30th of the year ending in two.

EFFECT OF CHANGES MADE BY STATE GOVERNMENT, TRIBAL RELATIONS & ELECTIONS COMMITTEE (First Substitute): The statutory deadline for the Supreme Court to adopt a redistricting plan, if the Commission fails to adopt a plan in a timely fashion, is moved to April 30th of the year ending in two.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Original Bill: *The committee recommended a different version of the bill than what was heard.* PRO: This simply aligns statute with the constitutional deadline for the Redistricting Commission to complete its work. A later deadline impacts members and staff holiday plans. This is the right thing to do.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Hans Zeiger, Prime Sponsor; Jay Jennings, Office of the Secretary of State.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.