
Ways & Means Committee

HB 2872

Brief Description: Establishing a period of public and legislative review of appropriations legislation.

Sponsors: Representatives Alexander, Seaquist, Bailey, Ericks, Dammeier, Schmick, Wallace, Morrell, Simpson and Smith.

<p style="text-align: center;">Brief Summary of Bill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prohibits the House and Senate from voting on an operating, capital, or transportation budget bill unless 72 hours have elapsed since the bill was last subject to amendment.

Hearing Date: 1/25/10

Staff: Kristen Fraser (786-7148).

Background:

Legislative proceedings and internal operations may be governed by state constitutions, statutes, or legislative rules. Legislative rules typically establish committee and floor procedures. They may also govern administration, ethics, decorum, etc.

Legislative Proceedings in Washington.

Under Article II, section 9 of the state constitution, the two houses of the Washington State Legislature separately adopt rules to govern their respective proceedings. In addition, the House and Senate adopt joint rules to govern interactions between the bodies and other matters of mutual interest.

The Sixty-First Legislature has adopted several rules that relate to notice and disclosure of hearings and legislation. Rules of both the House and Senate generally require five days notice before a bill may receive a public hearing, and also require that each bill be read on three separate days. Any rule, including the three-reading rule, may be temporarily suspended by the respective body with a two-thirds vote of the members present. Within a specified number of

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days prior to adjournment *sine die*, a body may suspend the three-reading rule with a majority vote. In addition, on 24 hours' notice any rule may be rescinded or amended by a majority of the members elected.

In the case of a conference committee report that contains new items, the Joint Rules of the Sixty-First Legislature require a 24-hour waiting period after the report is distributed before either body may vote on the report.

Legislative Waiting Periods in Other States.

In most states there is some form of a waiting period before legislative bodies may act on bills. Most states have constitutional requirements that bills be read on three separate days before passage. Often these constitutional requirements permit a legislative body to waive the multiple-reading requirement with the consent of a specified percentage of members. (In this regard, Washington is in the minority, because its separate reading requirements are established by legislative rule rather than the state constitution.)

In addition, some states establish waiting periods that apply specifically to budget legislation. These specific restrictions may be found in state constitutions, statutes, or legislative rules.

Budget Bills.

Washington operates on a biennial budget period that begins on July 1 of each odd-numbered year. Typically the Legislature enacts three separate omnibus appropriations acts each odd-numbered year: operating, capital, and transportation. In even-numbered years these budgets may be amended by supplemental omnibus appropriations acts.

Summary of Bill:

The Senate and the House may not vote on an omnibus operating, capital, or transportation appropriations bill (budget bill) unless 72 hours have elapsed since the bill was last subject to amendment. "Amendment" means any proposed change to a bill and includes executive action by a standing committee of the Senate or House of Representatives, adoption of a conference report, or vote to concur with an opposite house amendment.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.