

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## 2SSJR 8206

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As Passed Senate, March 13, 2001

**Brief Description:** Requiring geographic distribution of initiative signatures.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Hargrove, McDonald, Jacobsen, Long, Costa, Regala, Snyder, Winsley, T. Sheldon, Gardner, McCaslin, Morton, Haugen, Rasmussen, Hochstatter, Honeyford, Oke and McAuliffe).

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** State & Local Government: 2/1/01, 2/19/01 [DPS-WM, DNP].

Ways & Means: 2/27/01, 3/6/01 [DP2S, DNP].

Passed Senate: 3/13/01, 34-15.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON STATE & LOCAL GOVERNMENT

**Majority Report:** That Substitute Senate Joint Resolution No. 8206 be substituted therefor, and the substitute joint resolution do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators Patterson, Chair; Gardner, Hale, Haugen, Horn, McCaslin, T. Sheldon and Swecker.

**Minority Report:** Do not pass.

Signed by Senator Roach.

**Staff:** Eugene Green (786-7405)

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

**Majority Report:** That Second Substitute Senate Joint Resolution No. 8206 be substituted therefor, and the second substitute joint resolution do pass.

Signed by Senators Brown, Chair; Hewitt, Honeyford, Long, Parlette, Rasmussen, Regala, Sheahan, Snyder, Winsley and Zarelli.

**Minority Report:** Do not pass.

Signed by Senators Constantine, Vice Chair; Fairley, Vice Chair; Fraser, Kline, Kohl-Welles and Rossi.

**Staff:** Steve Jones (786-7440)

**Background:** The Constitution of Washington State vests legislative authority in the Legislature, but reserves to the people the power to propose, enact or reject bills independent of the Legislature. The first power reserved to the people is the initiative. Article II, Section 1, requires an initiative petition to have valid signatures equal to 8 percent of the votes cast for the office of Governor at the last gubernatorial election preceding the initial filing of the initiative.

The number of initiatives certified to the ballot, or receiving the requisite number of signatures, in the last eight years has more than doubled over the previous two ten-year periods. The number of initiatives passed during these periods has remained relatively unchanged.

**Summary of Bill:** Article II, Section 1 of the Constitution of Washington State is amended so that at least 6 of the congressional districts each have a number of valid signatures equal to at least one-ninth of the required signatures.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Effective Date:** January 1, 2004.

**Testimony For:** This will assure broad geographic support for the submission of an initiative measure to the Legislature or the people. The delayed effective date will reduce the fiscal impact of the bill by allowing additional time for the development of a statewide voter registration database.

**Testimony Against:** (original bill) People should not feel their signature is "wasted."

**Testified:** Senator Jim Hargrove, prime sponsor (pro); Steve Gano (pro); Tony Wells, Hunters Heritage Council (pro); Alan Worrell (pro); Cherie Davidson, League of Women Voters (con); Jim King, Citizens for Outdoor Recreation (con); Ed Owens, Citizens for Responsible Wildlife Management, Salmon for Washington (pro); David Elliott, Office of Secretary of State; Linda Johnson, WA Farm Bureau (pro).