

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6244

As of January 31, 2018

Title: An act relating to the election of members of the house of representatives from house districts within each legislative district.

Brief Description: Providing for the election of members of the house of representatives from house districts within each legislative district.

Sponsors: Senators Braun, Mullet and Becker.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: State Government, Tribal Relations & Elections: 1/31/18.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Divides each legislative district into two single-member representative districts.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT, TRIBAL RELATIONS & ELECTIONS

Staff: Samuel Brown (786-7470)

Background: Redistricting Commission. The state Redistricting Commission (Commission), established by constitutional amendment, provides for the redistricting of state legislative and congressional districts every ten years based on the federal decennial census. The Commission, which first met in 1991, 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, and the fifth person, the chair, is appointed by the four legislative appointees. The affirmative vote of three members is required to approve the redistricting plan.

Redistricting Plan. The Commission's plan must provide for 49 legislative districts. Each district must have population as nearly as equal as practicable. District boundaries should coincide with boundaries of local political subdivisions and communities of interest and be composed of convenient, contiguous, and compact territory. The plan must provide fair and

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effective representation, encourage electoral competition, and may not be drawn to favor or discriminate against a political party or group.

Each Senator is elected from a distinct legislative district. Two Representatives are elected at-large from each legislative district. From 1982 to 1991, the 19th and 39th senatorial districts were divided into two single-member representative districts.

Redistricting Plan Report. At the time the redistricting plan is published, the Commission must publish a report, which includes:

- the population and percentage deviation from the average for every legislative district;
- an explanation of the criteria used in developing the redistricting plan, including any justifications for deviations from the average district population;
- a map of all the districts; and
- the estimated cost incurred by the counties for adjusting precinct boundaries.

Summary of Bill: Each legislative district must be divided into two single-member representative districts of as nearly equal population as practicable. The redistricting plan report must also include population and percentage deviations for house districts, and justifications for any deviations.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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: PRO: This is consistent with access to democracy. It will reduce the impact of money in House elections and increase geographic diversity, making for better representation.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator John Braun, Prime Sponsor.

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