
State Government Committee

HB 1660

Brief Description: Increasing accountability of ballot measure petitions.

Sponsors: Representatives McDermott, Armstrong and Dickerson.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires signature gatherers to swear under penalty of perjury that every person who signed the petition signed his or her true name, provided the correct address information, and was eligible to sign.

Hearing Date: 2/25/03

Staff: Katie Blinn (786-7114).

Background:

The number of valid signatures necessary for an initiative to the people or an initiative to the legislature is 8 percent of the votes cast for Governor at the last gubernatorial election. The number of signatures necessary for a referendum is 4 percent. Once the text of an initiative is filed with the Secretary of State (Secretary), the Attorney General writes a 75-word summary and the ballot title. The ballot title consists of a subject statement, a 30-word concise description, and a question. The ballot title becomes the title of the measure on all petitions, ballots and other material, and the summary appears after the ballot title on all petitions.

Each petition must have lines for 20 signatures on one side, and the text of the measure printed on the other side. Each person who signs a petition must print his or her name, street address and county, and must acknowledge that he or she is a legal voter and has signed the petition only once. Once the sponsor of the initiative or referendum has enough signatures to exceed the 4 percent or 8 percent requirement, the petitions are filed with the Secretary for certification.

Summary of Bill:

Initiative and referendum signature gatherers must swear under penalty of perjury that every person who signed the petition:

- signed his or her true name;
- provided the correct address information; and
- was eligible to sign.

The statement must be signed before a notary public.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not Requested.

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