

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 1119

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Government Operations & Elections, February 25, 2004

Title: An act relating to restrictions on mailing by legislators.

Brief Description: Regulating mail to constituents.

Sponsors: Representatives Ruderman, Nixon, Haigh, McDermott, Tom, Miloscia, Clibborn, Hudgins, Cody, Hunter, Kessler and Darneille.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Government Operations & Elections: 3/21/03, 4/2/03 [DP]; 2/18/04, 2/25/04 [DPA, DNP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & ELECTIONS

Majority Report: Do pass as amended.

Signed by Senators Roach, Chair; Stevens, Vice Chair; Berkey, Horn and McCaslin.

Minority Report: Do not pass.

Signed by Senator Fairley.

Staff: Diane Smith (786-7410)

Background: For incumbent legislators up for reelection, there is a prohibition against the use of state facilities for sending letters, newsletters, brochures or other pieces of literature to constituents either by regular or electronic mail within 12 months of the next general election in which the legislators are running for office. There are limited exceptions to this general rule. Under one exception, sending two newsletters during the 12-month period is allowed.

Summary of Amended Bill: For the period beginning December 1 and continuing through the 45th day after adjournment of the next regular session, an incumbent candidate for the Legislature may send an unlimited number of electronic mailings so long as no more than one is sent per week, about any one specific type of subject.

Amended Bill Compared to Original Bill: The original bill had no restriction on the frequency or number of electronic mailings that could be sent using state facilities by incumbent legislators during the period from December 1 through 45 days after adjournment of the next regular session immediately preceding the legislator's re-election campaign period.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: We do not campaign with these emails. They are normal and usual continuations of our ongoing email communications with our constituents. They require minimal state resources and are thousands of dollars cheaper than sending out mailings.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Representative Ruderman, Representative Nixon.