

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5441

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Government Operations & Elections, March 4, 2003

Title: An act relating to paper size of initiative and referendum petitions.

Brief Description: Allowing initiative and referendum petitions on 8 1/2 by 11 paper.

Sponsors: Senators Roach and Esser.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Government Operations & Elections: 2/14/03, 3/4/03 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & ELECTIONS

Majority Report: Do pass.

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

Staff: Mac Nicholson (786-7445)

Background: The format for initiative and referendum petitions, including type of paper, size, and content, is prescribed in statute. Petitions must be printed on paper not less than 11 inches wide by 14 inches long.

Summary of Bill: The size of paper for petitions is changed to not less than 8-1/2 inches wide by 11 inches long. The Secretary of State must adopt rules establishing readability standards including, but not limited to, the minimum font size for text.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: Smaller paper size makes petitions easier to handle and circulate.

Testimony Against: A smaller paper size for initiative petitions raises concerns about fraud and changes that could be made to the initiative. Smaller petitions may require smaller print on the measure making it harder for the electorate to read and understand.

Testified: PRO: Senator Pam Roach, prime sponsor; CON: Kristen Sawin, AWB; Rick Slunaker, AGC.