
SENATE BILL 6004

State of Washington 58th Legislature 2003 Regular Session

By Senators Deccio, Franklin, Kohl-Welles, McAuliffe, Oke and Winsley

Read first time 02/28/2003. Referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

1 AN ACT Relating to information on the fiscal and policy impact of
2 state ballot measures; amending RCW 29.79.075 and 29.81.250; adding a
3 new section to chapter 29.79 RCW; and creating a new section.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that a more informed
6 voter is a better voter. Most of the time, initiatives do not truly
7 reveal their intent to voters and what their costs might be. It is
8 necessary that full disclosure be made. Occasionally, initiative
9 supporters are not aware of the unintended consequences of their
10 attempts to establish laws by the initiative process. Therefore, the
11 legislature further finds that the initiative process must be protected
12 and accountable.

13 **Sec. 2.** RCW 29.79.075 and 2002 c 139 s 1 are each amended to read
14 as follows:

15 (1) The office of financial management, in consultation with the
16 secretary of state, the attorney general, and any other appropriate
17 state or local agency, shall prepare a fiscal impact statement for each
18 of the following state ballot measures: (~~(1)~~) (a) An initiative to

1 the people that is certified to the ballot; ~~((+2))~~ (b) an initiative
2 to the legislature that will appear on the ballot; ~~((+3))~~ (c) an
3 alternative measure appearing on the ballot that the legislature
4 proposes to an initiative to the legislature; ~~((+4))~~ (d) a referendum
5 bill referred to voters by the legislature; and ~~((+5))~~ (e) a
6 referendum measure appearing on the ballot. Fiscal impact statements
7 must be written in clear and concise language and avoid legal and
8 technical terms when possible, and may include easily understood
9 graphics.

10 ~~((A fiscal impact))~~ (2) The statement prepared by the office of
11 financial management must describe any projected increase or decrease
12 in the sales tax or other appropriate existing state revenues, costs,
13 expenditures, or indebtedness that the state or local governments will
14 experience if the ballot measure were approved by state voters.

15 (3) For any proposed initiative, the passage of which would result
16 in a revenue decrease, the office of financial management, as part of
17 its financial impact statement, shall indicate the equivalent increase
18 in the sales and use tax, business and occupation tax, state property
19 tax, and motor vehicle fuel tax that would be sufficient to make up the
20 decrease in revenue to a fund or account as a result of an initiative.

21 (4) Where appropriate, a fiscal impact statement may include both
22 estimated dollar amounts and a description placing the estimated dollar
23 amounts into context. A fiscal impact statement must include both a
24 summary of not to exceed one hundred words and a more detailed
25 statement that includes the assumptions that were made to develop the
26 fiscal impacts. The summary may not include the information from
27 subsection (3) of this section.

28 (5) Fiscal impact statements must be available online from the
29 secretary of state's web site and included in the state voters'
30 pamphlet.

31 NEW SECTION. Sec. 3. A new section is added to chapter 29.79 RCW
32 to read as follows:

33 For a ballot measure that proposes to reduce directly or
34 indirectly, in any way, revenue for state or local government, the
35 ballot measure proponents shall explain clearly in a prepared statement
36 which government services or programs could be reduced or eliminated as
37 a result of the decrease in revenues.

1 **Sec. 4.** RCW 29.81.250 and 2002 c 139 s 2 are each amended to read
2 as follows:

3 The secretary of state shall determine the format and layout of the
4 voters' pamphlet. The secretary of state shall print the pamphlet in
5 clear, readable type on a size, quality, and weight of paper that in
6 the judgment of the secretary of state best serves the voters. The
7 pamphlet must contain a table of contents. Federal and state offices
8 must appear in the pamphlet in the same sequence as they appear on the
9 ballot. Measures and arguments must be printed in the order specified
10 by RCW 29.79.300.

11 The voters' pamphlet must provide the following information for
12 each statewide issue on the ballot:

13 (1) The legal identification of the measure by serial designation
14 or number;

15 (2) The official ballot title of the measure;

16 (3) A statement prepared by the attorney general explaining the law
17 as it presently exists;

18 (4) A statement prepared by the attorney general explaining the
19 effect of the proposed measure if it becomes law;

20 (5) The fiscal impact statements prepared under RCW 29.79.075;

21 (6) The service or program reduction statement by the proponents of
22 the ballot measure;

23 (7) The total number of votes cast for and against the measure in
24 the senate and house of representatives, if the measure has been passed
25 by the legislature;

26 (~~(7)~~) (8) An argument advocating the voters' approval of the
27 measure together with any statement in rebuttal of the opposing
28 argument;

29 (~~(8)~~) (9) An argument advocating the voters' rejection of the
30 measure together with any statement in rebuttal of the opposing
31 argument;

32 (~~(9)~~) (10) Each argument or rebuttal statement must be followed
33 by the names of the committee members who submitted them, and may be
34 followed by a telephone number that citizens may call to obtain
35 information on the ballot measure;

36 (~~(10)~~) (11) The full text of each measure.

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