

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SJR 8205

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As of February 1, 2007

**Brief Description:** Relating to the constitutional provisions regarding initiatives and referendums.

**Sponsors:** Senator Jacobsen.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Government Operations & Elections: 1/30/07.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & ELECTIONS

**Staff:** Mac Nicholson (786-7445)

**Background:** The State Constitution vests the legislative authority of the State in the Legislature, but reserves to the people the powers of initiative and referendum.

**Summary of Bill:** The powers of initiative and referendum are removed from the State Constitution.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

**Committee/Commission/Task Force Created:** No.

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

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:** PRO: There is redress for elected representatives who make the wrong decision, and that is to not re-elect them. There are flaws in the initiative and referendum process. We have a system that doesn't work, and it needs to change. It is proper that after 100 years of initiative and referendum, the people discuss the powers and see if they still serve the people. The people should vote on it.

CON: Initiative and referendum powers were adopted because of concern about special interest influence on the Legislature. Initiative and referendum power give the citizens a voice in government and engages citizens in the process. It's a check and balance. Passing this resolution would eliminate the people's voice.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Senator Jacobsen, prime sponsor.

CON: Shawn Newman, Initiative and Referendum Institute.

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*