

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5637

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Governmental Operations, February 19, 2013

Title: An act relating to primary election voters' pamphlets.

Brief Description: Concerning primary election voters' pamphlets.

Sponsors: Senators Hasegawa, Fain, Mullet and Chase; by request of Secretary of State.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Governmental Operations: 2/19/13 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Roach, Chair; Benton, Vice Chair; Braun, Conway, Fraser, Hasegawa, Ranking Member; Rivers.

Staff: Samuel Brown (786-7470)

Background: The Secretary of State must print and distribute a voters' pamphlet to each household in the state, public libraries, and other locations the Secretary of State deems appropriate whenever a statewide ballot measure or office is scheduled to appear on the general election ballot. The voters' pamphlet may also be made available electronically. There is no requirement to print and distribute a voters' pamphlet for a primary election or a general election where no statewide ballot measure or office is scheduled to appear.

When printed, the voters' pamphlet must contain the following information:

- information about ballot measures and advisory vote measures;
- candidate statements, if submitted;
- contact information for the Public Disclosure Commission;
- contact information for the major political parties;
- a statement explaining the amendatory style used in ballot measures; and
- any additional information required by law or that the Secretary of State deems informative to voters.

Summary of Bill: Voters' pamphlets must be printed and distributed for the general election every year and for the primary election in even-numbered years.

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.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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: This is a common sense bill. We need to inform the public on what they're voting on. Printing a voters' pamphlet is a huge issue that was raised in every county during the last campaign. A number of elections were determined in the primary last year. Last year, a handful of counties printed a voters' pamphlet for the primary, and included statewide offices. This is disparate treatment of voters – some voters have information and some do not.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Hasegawa, prime sponsor; Kim Wyman, Secretary of State; Katie Blinn, Office of the Secretary of State.