H-1239.1

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**HOUSE BILL 1818**

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**State of Washington 64th Legislature 2015 Regular Session**

**By** Representatives Shea, McCaslin, Taylor, Haler, Klippert, and Schmick

AN ACT Relating to creating a task force to determine the impacts of adjusting the boundary lines of Washington to create two new states with one state east and one state west of the Cascade mountain range; and creating new sections.

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

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The legislature finds that since statehood, the lifestyles, culture, and economies of eastern and western Washington have been very distinct. Urbanization and rapid growth in the western portion of Washington state have progressively heightened this divergence of cultural and economic values from that of the eastern portion of the state. The legislature further finds that a reconsideration of the state boundary lines of Washington in light of these divergences and similarities is in order.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A legislative task force on state boundaries is established to determine the legal and political processes of making boundary line changes necessary to adjust the state boundary lines of Washington in order to create two new states from the territories of Washington state, with one state east of the Cascade mountain range and one state west of the Cascade mountain range, and to determine the various impacts of creating the two new states based on the assumption that their creation would occur.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The task force must determine: The appropriateness and effect of using existing county boundary lines versus creating new county boundary lines to form the two new states; the population and land mass of each new state; the demographics of each new state; the political distribution of each new state; the distribution of each new state's assets, liabilities, and public services; the economic impacts on each new state; the income levels and tax bases of each new state; the impact on the provision of and level of spending for education, health, and social services programs in each new state; the distribution of jail and prison beds in each new state; the distribution of various transportation modes, systems, and infrastructure, and other infrastructure, service, and fiscal impacts on each new state; and other considerations the task force believes are relevant in defining or contrasting each new state.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The task force must consist of ten members: Two from the house of representatives, one from each major political caucus, appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives; two from the senate, one from each major political caucus, appointed by the president of the senate; and one member representing the governor and appointed by the governor. The legislative membership must include an equal number of representatives from both the western and eastern portions of Washington state.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The task force must be jointly staffed by the appropriate legislative committee staff from the house of representatives and senate.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The task force must report its findings and conclusions to the legislature by September 30, 2015.

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