

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## HB 2623

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As Reported by Senate Committee On:  
Government Operations & Security, February 22, 2016

**Title:** An act relating to recounts of statewide advisory measures.

**Brief Description:** Concerning recounts of statewide advisory measures.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Van Werven, Bergquist, Holy and Muri; by request of Secretary of State.

**Brief History:** Passed House: 2/12/16, 94-1.

**Committee Activity:** Government Operations & Security: 2/22/16, 2/22/16 [DP].

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & SECURITY

**Majority Report:** Do pass.

Signed by Senators Roach, Chair; Pearson, Vice Chair; Habib, McCoy and Takko.

**Staff:** Samuel Brown (786-7470)

**Background:** Advisory Votes. Advisory votes were established in 2008 with the enactment of Initiative 960. Through an advisory vote, voters advise the Legislature whether to repeal or maintain a tax increase enacted by the Legislature. The results of advisory votes are non-binding and do not result in a change to the law.

If a legislative bill raising taxes is blocked from a public vote or is not referred to the voters, a measure for an advisory vote by the people is required and must be placed on the next general election ballot. "Blocked from a public vote" includes the presence of an emergency clause in a bill increasing taxes, bonding or contractually obligating taxes, or otherwise preventing a referendum on a bill increasing taxes. If the bill involves multiple revenue sources, each tax increased is subject to a separate advisory vote.

Election Recounts. The Secretary of State must direct a recount of election results for any statewide measure when the difference between approval and rejection of the measure is less than 2000 votes and also equals less than 0.5 percent of the total number of votes cast on the measure. Any group of five or more voters may apply for a recount of all or part of the votes on any ballot measure. The group must deposit \$0.25 for each ballot recounted if a manual recount is sought, and \$0.15 for each ballot recounted if a machine recount is sought.

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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.*

**Summary of Bill:** Statewide advisory votes are exempted from recount requirements. The Secretary of State may not direct a recount for any statewide advisory vote.

**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: Advisory votes are nonbinding, but give voters an important voice in legislation that has been passed. This will be a cost savings to taxpayers.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Representative Van Werven, Prime Sponsor; Toni McKinley-Camp, Office of the Secretary of State.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** No one.