

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5182

As of January 19, 2021

Title: An act relating to advisory votes.

Brief Description: Concerning advisory votes.

Sponsors: Senators Kuderer, Hunt, Conway, Darneille, Das, Dhingra, Hasegawa, Lovelett, Nguyen, Pedersen, Van De Wege and Wilson, C..

Brief History:

Committee Activity: State Government & Elections: 1/20/21.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Repeals the requirement that advisory votes for tax increase legislation appear on the ballot and voters' pamphlet.
- Requires that information on how measures passed by the Legislature will increase or decrease state revenue and how increased revenue will be expended or what state expenditures will be eliminated as a result appear in the voters' pamphlet.
- Requires that a pie chart showing operating budget expenditures for the most recent biennium appear in the voters' pamphlet.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT & ELECTIONS

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 nonbinding and do not result in a change to the law.

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

A measure for an advisory vote by the people must be placed on the next general election ballot if a legislative bill raising taxes is not referred to the voters or contains an emergency clause, bonds or contractually obligates taxes, or otherwise prevents a referendum. If the bill involves multiple revenue sources, each is subject to a separate advisory vote.

Voters' Pamphlet. 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, including an advisory vote, is scheduled to appear on the general election ballot. For advisory votes, the voters' pamphlet must include:

- the measure's short description;
- a ten-year cost projection of the measure by the Office of Financial Management, including an annual breakdown;
- the names and office contact information of legislators; and
- how legislators voted on the tax increase legislation.

Summary of Bill: The bill as referred to committee not considered.

Summary of Bill (Proposed Substitute): Advisory Votes. The requirement that advisory votes for tax increase legislation appear on the ballot at the subsequent general election is repealed.

Voters' Pamphlet. Information on advisory votes is not required to be printed in the voters' pamphlet. The voters' pamphlet must also include:

- brief descriptions of how measures passed by the Legislature in the previous session will increase or decrease state revenues and how revenue generated will be expended or, if a measure decreases revenue, what expenditures will be reduced; and
- a pie chart showing state operating budget expenditures by areas of government.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 14, 2021.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

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