

SB 827 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Rules

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Meeting Dates: 4/6

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Requires Secretary of State (SOS) to submit to Legislative Assembly, by November 1 of each odd-numbered year, list of each prospective statewide initiative petition that has been filed for upcoming general election. Requires submission to include text, ballot title, and total number of signatures gathered for each prospective initiative. Requires SOS to provide updates during first week of December, January, and February. Requires nonpartisan legislative staff to provide to legislative leadership impartial analysis of policy, fiscal and revenue impacts, and legality for each prospective initiative submitted by SOS. Requires legislative leadership to use information from nonpartisan staff to determine whether state would benefit from holding public hearings on one or more prospective initiatives during even-year session.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

In 1902, voters approved a ballot measure that created Oregon's initiative petition process, which is a method of direct democracy that allows any person to propose new laws, change existing laws, or amend the Oregon Constitution. Initiatives for state measures require a prospective petition to be filed with the Secretary of State (SOS), which contains the text of the proposed law or constitutional amendment. The prospective petition must also contain between 1,000 and 2,000 signatures of electors, as verified by the SOS. If verified, the SOS forwards the prospective petition to the Attorney General to draft the ballot title and seek public input, after which the Attorney General certifies the ballot title and files it with the SOS. The chief petitioner(s) then circulate the petition for signatures, and, if verified, the petition qualifies to be put on the ballot at the next regularly scheduled general election, which is held in November of every even-numbered year.

The Legislative Assembly may also choose to refer legislation to the voters. Both houses of the Legislative Assembly must vote to refer the measure, and the referral cannot be vetoed by the Governor. Any change to the Oregon Constitution passed by the Legislative Assembly requires a referral to voters.

Senate Bill 827 requires the Secretary of State to submit a list of prospective statewide initiative petitions that have been filed for the upcoming general election, by November 1 of each odd-numbered year, for analysis to determine whether public hearings on the petitions would be beneficial during each even-numbered year legislative session.