

SB 169 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Rules

Action Date: 03/21/23

Action: Do pass with amendments and requesting referral to Ways and Means. (Printed A-Engrossed.)

Vote: 4-0-1-0

Yeas: 4 - Hansell, Knopp, Lieber, Manning Jr

Exc: 1 - Steiner

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: No revenue impact

Prepared By: Leslie Porter, LPRO Analyst

Meeting Dates: 3/14, 3/21

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Increases the number of most commonly spoken languages in each county, other than English, into which the Secretary of State is required to translate and print state and county voters' pamphlets, from the top five to the top 10. Increases the requisite number of individuals who speak a language for it to be considered among the 10 most commonly spoken languages in each county, other than English, from 100 individuals to 300 individuals. Makes provisions applicable to state and county voters' pamphlets distributed on or after April 30, 2024.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- The use of 2020 Census data for the calculation of which languages to include
- Translations of voters' pamphlets that are online versus printed and mailed
- Increased translations help ensure that voters understand the information provided to them
- Expanded access to democracy

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

Replaces the measure.

BACKGROUND:

The Oregon voters' pamphlet is a publication produced and distributed by the Secretary of State (SOS) Elections Division. A voters' pamphlet is produced for each primary and general election, as well as for any special statewide election. One copy of the voters' pamphlet is mailed to every household in the state. The voters' pamphlet includes information about candidates, measures, recognized political parties, and any assembly of electors. It also includes instructions for marking the ballot, a complete list of federal and state candidates, and other information on the voting process.

A county may publish a county voters' pamphlet and distribute it themselves; publish a county voters' pamphlet and have it inserted in the state voters' pamphlet for elections for which the SOS is required to publish a pamphlet; or not publish a county voters' pamphlet and have certain local candidates and measures be eligible for inclusion in the state voters' pamphlet (OAR 165-007-0030).

House Bill 3021 (2021) requires the SOS to ensure that each state and county voters' pamphlet mailed to county residents is also translated into the most common languages spoken in the state and each county, other than English, and is available on the SOS and applicable county websites. The measure specifies sections of the voters' pamphlet required to be professionally translated by SOS and allows the submission of translations of certain candidate and measure statements. Lastly, the measure establishes a Translation Advisory Council and requires the SOS to consult with the council on the translation of voters' pamphlets.

SB 169 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Bill 169 A increases the number of most commonly spoken languages in each county, other than English, into which the Secretary of State is required to translate and print state and county voters' pamphlets.