

House Bill 2840

Sponsored by COMMITTEE ON RULES

SUMMARY

The following summary is not prepared by the sponsors of the measure and is not a part of the body thereof subject to consideration by the Legislative Assembly. It is an editor's brief statement of the essential features of the measure **as introduced**.

Increases word limit for ballot title captions for initiated or referred state measures.

A BILL FOR AN ACT

Relating to ballot titles; creating new provisions; and amending ORS 250.035.

Be It Enacted by the People of the State of Oregon:

SECTION 1. ORS 250.035 is amended to read:

250.035. (1) The ballot title of any measure, other than a state measure, to be initiated or referred shall consist of:

(a) A caption of not more than 10 words which reasonably identifies the subject of the measure;

(b) A question of not more than 20 words which plainly phrases the chief purpose of the measure so that an affirmative response to the question corresponds to an affirmative vote on the measure; and

(c) A concise and impartial statement of not more than 175 words summarizing the measure and its major effect.

(2) The ballot title of any state measure to be initiated or referred shall consist of:

(a) A caption of not more than *[15]* **40** words that reasonably identifies the subject matter of the state measure. The caption of an initiative or referendum amendment to the Constitution shall begin with the phrase, "Amends Constitution," which shall not be counted for purposes of the *[15-word]* **40-word** caption limit;

(b) A simple and understandable statement of not more than 25 words that describes the result if the state measure is approved. The statement required by this paragraph shall include either the phrase, "I vote" or "vote yes," or a substantially similar phrase, which may be placed at any point within the statement;

(c) A simple and understandable statement of not more than 25 words that describes the result if the state measure is rejected. The statement required by this paragraph shall not describe existing statutory or constitutional provisions in a way that would lead an average elector to believe incorrectly that one of those provisions would be repealed by approval of the state measure, if approval would not have that result. Any thing or action described both in the statement required by paragraph (b) of this subsection and in the statement required by this paragraph shall be described using the same terms in both statements, to the extent practical. Any different terms must be terms that an average elector would understand to refer to the same thing or action. The statement shall include either the phrase, "I vote" or "vote no," or a substantially similar phrase, which may be placed at any point within the statement; and

(d) A concise and impartial statement of not more than 125 words summarizing the state meas-

NOTE: Matter in **boldfaced** type in an amended section is new; matter *[italic and bracketed]* is existing law to be omitted. New sections are in **boldfaced** type.

1 ure and its major effect.

2 (3) The statements required by subsection (2)(b) and (c) of this section shall be written so that,
3 to the extent practicable, the language of the two statements is parallel.

4 (4) The statement required by subsection (2)(b) of this section shall be written so that an affir-
5 mative response to the statement corresponds to an affirmative vote on the state measure.

6 (5) The statement required by subsection (2)(c) of this section shall be written so that an affir-
7 mative response to the statement corresponds to a negative vote on the state measure.

8 (6) To avoid confusion, a ballot title shall not resemble any title previously filed for a measure
9 to be submitted at that election.

10 (7) In the statements required by subsection (2)(b), (c) and (d) of this section, reasonable dis-
11 cretion shall be allowed in the use of articles and conjunctions, but the statements shall not omit
12 articles and conjunctions that are necessary to avoid confusion to or misunderstanding by an aver-
13 age elector.

14 **SECTION 2. The amendments to ORS 250.035 by section 1 of this 2009 Act apply to ballot**
15 **titles for state initiative or referendum petitions for which a prospective petition is filed on**
16 **or after the effective date of this 2009 Act.**

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