

REVENUE: No revenue impact

FISCAL: Minimal fiscal impact, no statement issued

Action: Do Pass
Vote: 5 - 0 - 0
Yeas: Beyer, Burdick, Ferrioli, Starr, Rosenbaum
Nays: 0
Exc.: 0
Prepared By: Erin Seiler, Administrator
Meeting Dates: 2/19

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: Changes membership and meeting requirements of Citizens' Initiative Review Commission (the Commission). Directs Commission establish compensation for electors by rule. Eliminates sunset. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- History of Commission and initiative review process
- Increase in citizen participation on Commission
- Importance in providing voters' quality and unbiased information on ballot measures
- Innovative method of discussing ballot measures
- Removal of sunset
- Grant and private source of funding
- Compensation for participants

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT: No amendment.

BACKGROUND: The Oregon Citizen Initiative Review process was created by House Bill 2895 (2009), which authorized the Secretary of State to have non-profit organizations form citizen panels to review and create official statements on ballot initiative measures. For each initiative to be reviewed, a 24-member citizen panel is created by Healthy Democracy Oregon, the designated non-partisan, non-profit organization. Panelists are selected based on geographic location, party affiliation, age, voting history, and other demographic factors.

In 2011, the Legislature passed House Bill 2634, creating the 11-member Citizens' Initiative Review Commission (the Commission) to facilitate the review by citizen panels of, one or more, initiative petitions for a regular general election. The Commission is comprised of 11 members, with three members appointed by Governor, who have at some time been selected to serve on an explanatory statement committee; one member recommended by the leadership of the Democratic party in the Senate and one member recommended by the leadership of the Republican party in the Senate; one member recommended by the leadership of the political party with the largest representation in the Senate that is not the same party as the Governor; and four electors who have served on a citizen panel.

Senate Bill 1544 would increase the number of voters on the Commission from four to six; reduce the number of moderators to two; and permit the Commission to establish by rule, compensation for participants. In addition, the measure would allow the initiative review panel to meet on not fewer than three and not more than five consecutive days for a total of, not less than 24 hours, and removes the sunset date of July 1, 2015.

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This summary has not been adopted or officially endorsed by action of the committee.