

SJR 201 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Carrier: Sen. Burdick

Senate Committee On Rules

Action Date: 03/05/20
Action: Do adopt.
Vote: 3-0-0-2
Yeas: 3 - Burdick, Dembrow, Roblan
Abs: 2 - Baertschiger Jr, Boquist
Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued
Revenue: No revenue impact
Prepared By: Tyler Larson, LPRO Analyst
Meeting Dates: 3/3, 3/5

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Proposes amendment to Oregon Constitution to reduce portion of each house that constitutes a quorum to do business from two-thirds to a simple majority. Refers proposed amendment to voters for their approval or rejection at the next regular general statewide election.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Quorum requirements in other states and public bodies
- Impact of walkouts on the operation of the Legislative Assembly
- Amendment to limit length of session to specified number of "session" days as opposed to "calendar" days

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Section 12, Article IV of the Constitution of the State of Oregon establishes a two-thirds majority of each chamber of the Legislative Assembly as a quorum to do business. The constitutional quorum requirement allows a minority of members to prevent the chamber from undertaking business by not attending floor sessions. Forty-six states require a simple majority of legislators for a quorum to do business; Oregon is one of four states that require a supermajority of two-thirds. Senate Joint Resolution 201 proposes an amendment to the Oregon Constitution to reduce the portion of each chamber that constitutes a quorum to do business from two-thirds to a simple majority. If passed, the resolution would be referred to voters for their approval or rejection at the next regular general statewide election.