



STATE OF WASHINGTON

January 6, 2011

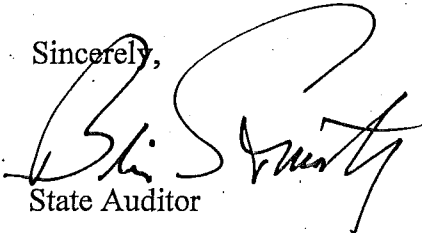
TO: State Legislative Leaders

RE: Legislative Transparency

In the spirit of open and accountable government, we support a proposed constitutional amendment to create greater legislative transparency. The attached proposal, recommended by the Washington Policy Center, would prohibit blank bills from being introduced or voted on by the Legislature. While the use of "title-only bills" is a rare procedure, the public concern substantially justifies eliminating their use entirely. The proposal would also require a minimum time for public notice of bills before a legislative hearing or action on the bill.

These basic reforms will build the public trust and ensure that government is open and accountable to the public. Please give your support to this proposed constitutional amendment.

Sincerely,


State Auditor


State Attorney General





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BE IT RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON, IN LEGISLATIVE SESSION ASSEMBLED:

THAT, Transparency and public disclosure in the legislative process is vital to a representative democracy. THAT, At the next general election to be held in this state the secretary of state shall submit to the qualified voters of the state for their approval and ratification, or rejection, a new section amending Article 2, an amendment to Article 2, section 19, and an amendment to Article 2, section 22 of the Constitution of the state of Washington to read as follows:

Article II, new section. No bill shall be eligible for a public hearing until 72 hours after introduction. The public shall be provided at least 72 hours notification of the bills to be heard at a public hearing. No bill shall be eligible for legislative action of any kind unless it has first been subject to a public hearing in the same session of consideration. No bill shall be eligible for legislative action on the floor of either house until 72 hours after it has been placed on the floor calendar. This section may be suspended with two-thirds of the members elected to the house in which it is pending suspend this requirement, and every individual consideration of a bill or action suspending the requirement shall be recorded in the journal of the respective house.

Article II, section 19. No bill shall embrace more than one subject, and that shall be expressed in the title. No bill shall be eligible for public hearing or legislative consideration of any kind unless the bill shall lay forth in full the changes to any act or sections of law. Title only bills shall be prohibited.

Article II, section 22. No bill shall be eligible for final passage in either house unless copies of the bill in the form to be passed shall have been made available to the members of that house and the public for at least twenty-four hours, unless two-thirds of the members elected to the house in which it is pending suspend this requirement, and every individual consideration of a bill or action suspending the requirement shall be recorded in the journal of the respective house. No bill shall become a law unless on its final passage the vote be taken by yeas and nays, the names of the members voting for and against the same be entered on the journal of each house, and a majority of the members elected to each house be recorded thereon as voting in its favor.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the secretary of state shall cause notice of this constitutional amendment to be published at least four times during the four weeks next preceding the election in every legal newspaper in the state.