

2-2-21

House Government Operations Committee

Bill: HB 211, Initiatives and Referenda Amendments

Sponsor: Rep. Thurston

Floor Sponsor:

UASD Position: Tracking

This Bill: amends provisions relating to statewide and local initiatives and referenda.

Discussion: There have been discrepancies between referendums and initiatives. This bill clears up the discrepancies by providing more standardization to forms, requirements, and procedures for state and local initiatives and referendums. The requirement for the sponsor of the initiative having to have voted recently is no longer in place with this bill. It also modifies some other details in the referendum and imitative process. The Weber County Clerk's Office and the County Clerks Association of Utah support this bill. Members of the public voiced their support and opposition to this bill. Rep. Thurston said this bill coordinates with Rep. Teuscher's bill in the sense that they share a similar form requirement. The sponsor said there is some coordinating that can be put in place if both bills become law. The Utah Elections Office said this bill makes some technical changes and codifies current practices.

Yeas: 8

Nays: 1

N/V: 2

Outcome: Passed out of Committee with a favorable recommendation

Bill: HB 136, Initiative and Referenda Modifications

Sponsor: Rep. Teuscher

Floor Sponsor:

UASD Position: Tracking

This Bill: amends provisions relating to statewide and local initiatives and referenda.

Discussion: The sponsor said this bill is more of a change in policy compared to Rep. Thurston's bill, HB 211. The sponsor said there has been a lot of out of state money put into initiatives and referendums in Utah. This bill prohibits initiative and referendum signature gatherers from getting paid per signature. It requires the signature gatherer to wear a badge with a number to indicate who they are. It requires the Lieutenant Governor's Office and local election officials to post all initiatives and referendums. It requires the Governor's Office and local county election offices provide information on how individuals can remove their signature. The bill also requires gatherers to have information about the initiatives and referendums with them in a digital or paper format. The Office of Government Accountability supports this bill. Members of the committee voiced their concern about how difficult it makes the initiatives and referendum process. Members of the public voiced their support and opposition of this bill. A 1st substitute was adopted.

Yeas: 8

Nays: 3

N/V: 0

Outcome: 1st Substitute HB 136 Passed out of committee with a favorable recommendation

Bill: HB 242, Privacy Protection Amendments

Sponsor: Rep. Gibson

Floor Sponsor:

UASD Position: Tracking

This Bill: creates the position of data privacy officer and the Personal Privacy Oversight Committee in the Office of the State Auditor.

Discussion: The sponsor said this bill creates a data privacy officer within the State Auditor's Office. The job of the data privacy officer would be to look at state and local government data to make sure privacy does not get abused. The 1st Substitute was adopted. This substitute increases the local time from thirty days to ninety days. The Personal Privacy Oversight Committee will have specific requirements outlined in the 1st substitute. The sponsor said this bill is to protect the general public from the government. The State Auditor's Office said they developed a commission to look into data privacy that found the government is using private data appropriately. This bill simply codifies this commission. Members of the public voiced their support for this bill. The American Civil Liberties Union of Utah and the Libertas Institute

support this bill. The Weber County Clerk's Office supports this bill, but would like to address concerns with sponsor. The sponsor said lines 420-428 makes sure this process is holistic.

Yeas: 11

Nays: 0

N/V: 0

Outcome: 1st Substitute HB 242 Passed out of committee with a favorable recommendation and placed on the consent calendar