

HCS HB 322 -- WORD COUNT OF CERTAIN LEGISLATION

SPONSOR: Hill

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Elections and Elected Officials by a vote of 5 to 2.

This bill requires that a word count of proposed initiative petition legislation, either statutory or Constitutional amendment, be placed in boldface type at the end of ballot measures to inform voters of the actual length of a particular bill or amendment. The General Assembly or ballot proponent will provide the word count to the Secretary of State and petitions lacking the required word count shall be refused.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that the bill will provide notice to voters of the substantial length of some ballot measures. It will encourage voters to read the full text of ballot measures so that they will cast more informed votes.

Testifying for the bill was Representative Hill.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill say that the General Assembly and petition proponents should provide the word count to the Secretary of State. The requirements should not take up much space on a ballot.

Testifying on the bill was Trish Vincent, Secretary of State.